Paradise War
パラダイス・ウォー
2
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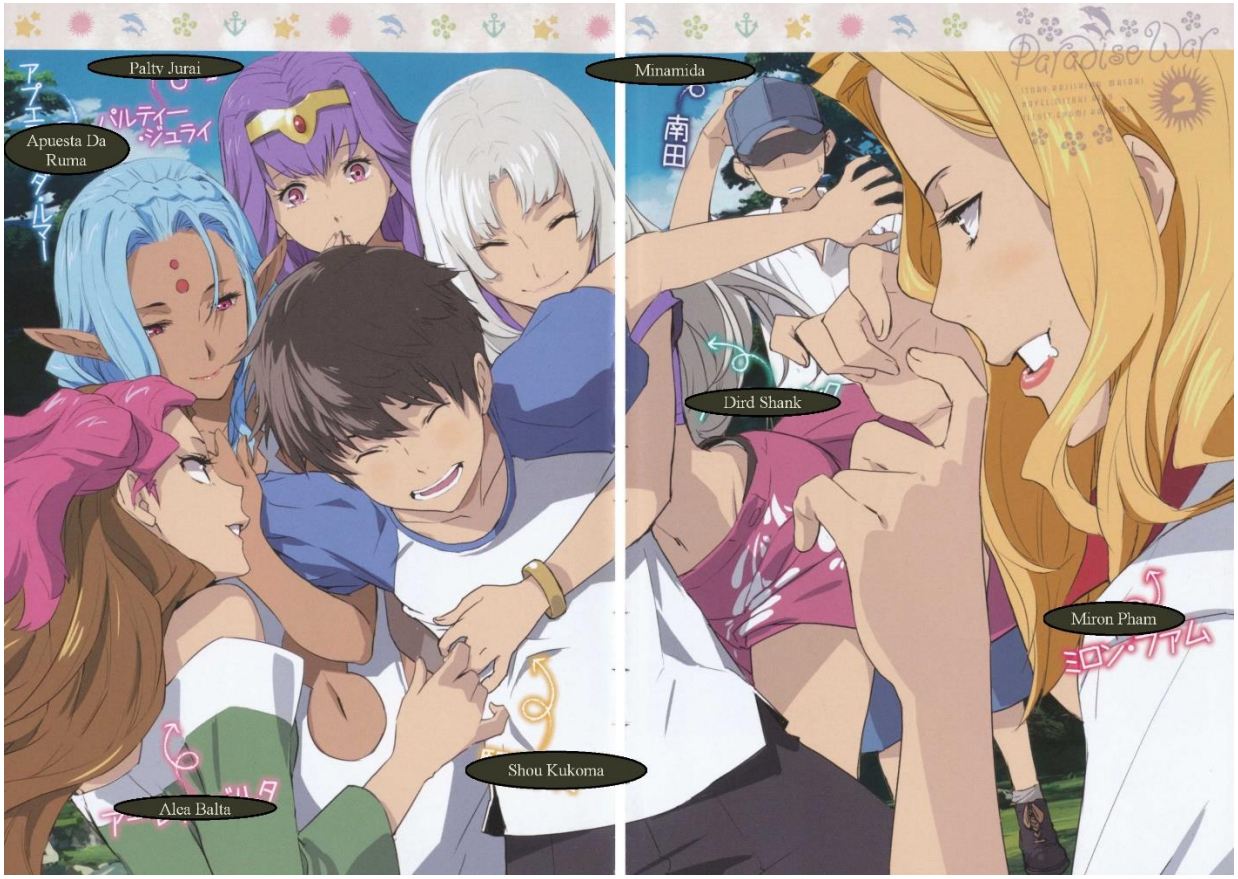
I'm going to teach you how to be an adult!
MIRON PHAM


Palty Jurai
パルティー・ジュライ
Apuesta Da Ruma
アプエスタ・ダ・ルマー
Alca Balta
アルカ・バルタ
Shou Kukoma
Minamida
南田
Dird Shank
Miron Pham
ミロン・ファム
Paradise War

I admire Dird's idea of using as much of the Earth's resources as possible for things that can be used in everyday life.
"I guess people in space have a lot of work to do."
"That's right. We're going through a lot too, you know?"

Paradise War

2

STORY:KAJISHIMA MASAKI
NOVEL:MIZUKI HIRO
ILLUST:ENAMI KATSUMI

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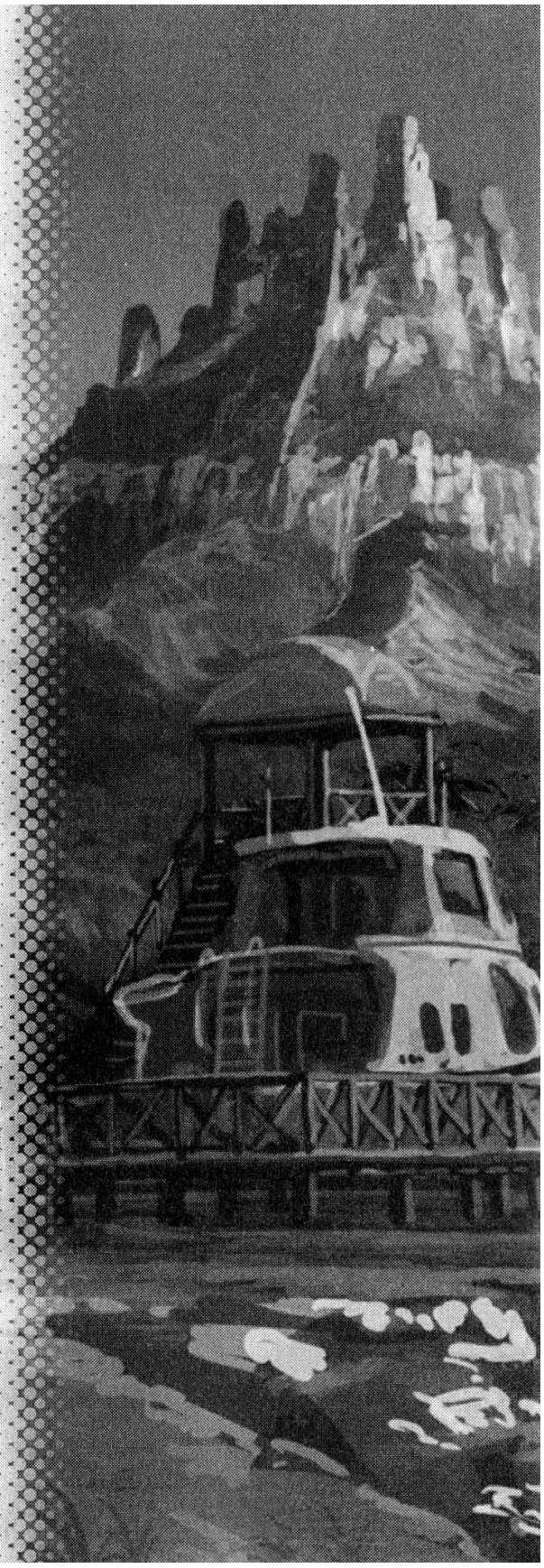

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Prologue

“──Minamida-san. I'm officially joining! Of course, I'm not joining anyone's guild!” Kukoma Shou, when he announced this on Banjō Island.

In a place on Earth - a large, dark room, several people were witnessing the moment on a huge monitor.

“Hoho, you've announced your own participation.”

“Hm... ... I don't know why you suddenly offered to participate, but ... ... Anyway, I guess this means that Earth's representative has been decided as well.”

“Now we just have to wait for the watchers to contact us.”

“It's only a matter of time, I suppose.”

The men in the room all breathed a sigh of relief, but their grim faces did not falter. The tense and unique tension in the room made the men's expressions even more grim.

“Well, ..., in this situation, the only thing we can do is surveillance, right?”

“Hmm. It's also our duty to check on them to make sure they don't do anything illegal.”

“It's frustrating to leave it to the boy, Miron and the others, but ... ... We'll have to keep an eye on ... ... how this battle opens and closes until the end.”

“Hmm. It's all going to be ..... from now on.”

In the video that the men were looking at, the boy was surrounded by girls and was pathetically distraught. Seeing this, the men breathed a small sigh and said, “Huh .....

Kukoma Shou.

This seemingly ordinary and simple boy, who could be found anywhere, would later cause a tremendous commotion, and lead the “Paradise War” in a direction that no one expected.

Episode 1 - Daily Life and Battle in Paradise

The day after Shou decided to participate in the proxy war on a large scale involving the universe.

Yet, he went to school as usual, finished his studies as usual, and got ready to go home as usual. Many of his classmates were still in the classroom in a friendly mood, all of them rivals who would be competing with Shou.

As Shou put away his notebooks and pens in his bag, a healthy, brown-skinned energetic girl - Dird Shank - approached him. “Hey, Shou, let's go home early, okay? Let's harpoon fish together again today!”

“Oh, sorry Dird, I have to go to Minamida-san's after school today...”

“Mmmm? Minamida-san's place? Why, why?” Dird showed a disgruntled face, her question was answered by the girl sitting next to Shou.

“Uh, you're talking about the proxy war, right?”

“Oh, yeah, that's right, Alea.”

“It was only yesterday, you know. Dird, why don't you give up today and go catch some fish by yourself?”

“Ugh~. It's so boring being alone! Oh, then let's do it together, Alea! Come on, you haven't done anything lately, have you?”

“No! I'll break down if I have to deal with the brainless Dird! I'm an intelligent person, not a manual laborer!”

Alea Balta, a girl who was distressed at being tangled up with Dird, preferred indoor hobbies such as tinkering with machines, but she still has more stamina than “normal girls” her age. However, from Alea's point of view, Dird's physical strength was inexhaustible.

Another girl appeared in front of them, tapping her abacus-shaped vocalizer lightly and saying. “... Alea, I think you should work out a little, too. I don't want you to fall over again at your next part-time job...”

“Ugh.”

Apuesta da Ruma, a quiet girl who, for some reason, rarely spoke with her own voice and usually used her soroban vocalizer for conversation. Alea looked more and more uncomfortable as she was told the truth by her.

“Hmm, she’s right, Alea, if you don't get your act together soon, you might lose the next battle to Shou.”

The last person to appear was Palty Jurai, who had a beautiful smile on her face and gave Shou the impression that she was a reliable older sister.

“What? Lose to Shou? Haha! That's not possible. I'm not so far gone that I'd lose to a beginner like Shou.”

“Haha. But we lost the other day, didn't we?”

”Oh, that wasn't a loss! We were stopped in the middle of the fight, so it's invalid! Besides, it wasn't a formal fight in the first place.”

“Uu... don't want to remember that time...”

“Yeah, I guess you're right. I haven't heard that sound in a long time...”

Both Dird and Alea's expressions darkened slightly at Apuesta and Palty's words.

At that time, Shou was cornered by the four of them and accidentally scratched the blackboard. Shou laughed as he recalled the incident and apologized, “I'm sorry.”

“No, it's okay. It's okay, Shou. Isn't Minamida-san waiting for you?”

Shou hurriedly stood up and slung his bag over his shoulder. “That's right. Well then guys, I'm going to go first today. I don't think I'll be gone that long... Oh, can you take care of Pī and Piyo for me?”

“Yes! We'll take care of them!”

“That's right. Go ahead, Shou, do your best.”

“Shou, I'll have dinner ready for you.”

“Hmm. Have a good day, Shou.”

“Piyo.” “Piyo?”

The four of them smiled, and in Dird's hand was an incubator with two healthy chicks growing in it. Life with the four of them and the two chicks had almost become an irreplaceable part of Shou's daily life.

“Yeah ..... thanks guys. I'm off!”

Thus, Shou waved to the four girls in their uniforms and left the classroom, running towards the school infirmary.

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“─Good afternoon! I'm sorry to keep you waiting.” And so Shou arrived at the infirmary, where Minamida and Miron were waiting.

“Hello, Kukoma-kun. We've been waiting for you.”

“Oh. Welcome, Shou-kun.”

Minamida, dressed in an aloha shirt, was the island's administrator and surrogate war monitor. He was a fearless but gentle man who cared for Shou at every turn. At his side are four adorable little creatures, the Cabbits. They were mysterious creatures that can understand human language.

Miron, on the other hand, doubled as a schoolteacher and the Doctor on the island. She was a genius who had graduated from college with a university degree, and she was glamorous, perfect-looking, and blonde, but she had a reputation for having a very difficult personality. She was also an observer in the proxy war.

“Well, well, sit down. Here, I'll give you a taste of what it's like to be an adult.”

“Oh, thank you very much.” Shou sat down on the pipe chair, unconcerned about the phrase that would normally have made him nervous, but at the same time she poured black coffee into a mug she had prepared and handed it to him. In other words, this is what she called an adult's taste.

Sadly, the fact that he was now able to accept such adult jokes was a result of being pushed around so much by Miron.

“Well. Well then, Kukoma-kun. I'd like to talk to you about the future.”

“Ah, yes.”

At Minamida's serious face, Shou also straightened up his posture to listen.

“First of all, ... are you sure you want to join this fight?”

“Yes. I haven't changed my mind.” Shou replied clearly, but Minamida had a blank expression on his face.

“Do you think the strength of your resolve is due to that blackboard... ...?”

“It's... ...” Shou thought for a moment when he was asked that question. It was true that at that time - when the four girls attacked him... The sound of the blackboard that he scratched by accident was enough to neutralize Dird and the others. It was because of this weakness that Shou

decided to join the fight. He thought that if he could use it well, he might be able to stop the girls.

“... ... I think that's the biggest thing. As long as I can use that sound, I should have a reasonable advantage, right?”

“That may be so, but... ...”

“If I can use that to somehow get one of the four girls groups to give up, maybe the other three will reconsider... ...”

“No, ... that's not the problem.”

“Huh?”

Minamida looked reluctant, and Shou returned the question with a puzzled look on his face.

Miron, who was sipping her coffee, interrupted him from the side. “What Minamida wants to ask is whether Shou-kun will really be able to attack those girls when the time comes to fight, right? Isn't that right, Minamida? Minamida.”

“Yeah, ... As far as I can tell, you're not cut out for fighting. No, not in terms of talent or anything like that. It's more of a personality thing. I can't really imagine you fighting Dird and the others.”

“Minamida-san... ...” Knowing Minamida's concern, Shou had mixed feelings. Then he thought. Would he be able to fight Dird and the others? Could he use the power that they also have - the Guardian System - to fight them? “I don't know about that... ... No, I'm sure I can' t fight them. Even when they attacked me at school before, I was just defending myself, I couldn't attack them in any way.”

“Then why did you join?”

“I thought that if I could use that sound - the sound of the blackboard - well, I might be able to stop them.”

Hearing Shou's opinion, Minamida nodded mysteriously. “I see... ... Kukoma-kun's goal is to keep this battle at a stalemate. It's true that using that sound might be able to neutralize Dird and the others. But that will lead to a collapse someday.”

“But before that, if we can somehow convince Dird and the others to stop the war...!”

“That's going to be difficult. Because whether or not to quit the game, it's not something that can be decided by their own will.”

“U... ...”

“Kukoma-kun. Sometimes forceful methods can be effective. Especially with pirates, because of their nature, they are definitely strongmen. It's like an instinct to survive. The older type of pirates in ... ... tend to deliberately avoid confrontation and fight on the board, which they are

good at. That's why proxy wars like this one started. I don't know how the girls themselves feel about it, but ..., at least, that's how many of the representatives of the guilds that elected them are."

"....."

Minamida's story made some sense to Shou. After everything that had happened before, he knew that Dird and the others were people who had different values than he did. They said that this war was like a sport. But Shou couldn't see it that way. There was a huge wall of difference between him and the girls.

Then Miron opened her mouth. "Well, besides, people who have been in different guilds for a long time are now going to unite into one country. Of course, there are some things that can't be cleared up by just talking."

"The parts that aren't clear: .....?"

"Yes, I think it's the same discomfort that Shou-kun feels with Dird and the others. That's why I want to get rid of that horny feeling."

Shou and Minamida looked at each other and couldn't help but laugh.

"However, the fact that they chose people like Dird and the others to represent them in such a proxy war shows that they have their fangs pulled out, don't they, the current guild members? Miron said what she wanted to say and gulped down her coffee.

Shou quietly walked over to Minamida and whispered. "Minamida-san ... ..., I'm feeling more uncomfortable with the teacher than Dird and the others."

"Yeah. It's exactly the same in that we can't solve the problem by talking, but this one is much more hopeless."

"Aarg? Did the two of you say something?"

"No, nothing!" Shou and Minamida joined their voices, and Miron narrowed her eyes quizzically.

"Ahem. Kukoma-kun. I understand how you feel. To be honest, I don't want to encourage you to participate in this fight, and I don't think fighting is good for you. But you're still going to participate, right?"

"... ... Yes!"

"This is your last chance to turn back. If you nod again, I'll have to agree to it. Miss Miron is also a witness... ... Are you sure you want to be a part of this fight? Kukoma-kun."

Minamida must be very worried about him. Shou could sense that.

But... "...Yes!" That's why Shou nodded.

Seeing Shou, Minamida breathed a “huff” and then smiled slightly and said, “──All right, I accept. Miss Miron, please inform the relevant authorities on Earth that Kukoma Shou-kun's participation has been officially approved. I will inform the Galactic Federation myself.”

“Okay, okay. Hey Minamida, now that one of the big problems has been taken care of, we're going to celebrate Shou-kun's new beginning, and we're going to...”

“Come on, Kukoma-kun! Then let's get ready for battle!”

“What? Where are we going?”

Minamida quickly ducked out of the way of Miron, who was sneaking up on him, and stood up, “Shit! Miron shouted, but Shou followed Minamida's lead and stood up.

“Oh, one thing before we go, Kukoma-kun, can you put your right arm out in front of you?”

“My right arm .....?”

Minamida's intentions were unknown to Shou, but he did as he was told, wondering why. Then a Cabbit appeared in front of him. The jewel-like object on its forehead glowed, and at the same time, a ring of light appeared around Shou's right arm, which wrapped around his wrist and disappeared. It happened in a flash.

“What? What? What was that?” Naturally panicked, Shou stared at his wrist where the ring had disappeared and touched it with his left hand, but there was nothing unusual about it.

Minamida laughed at Shou's appearance and replied. “Haha, it's fine. That's the key to the underground base.”

“The underground base .....?”

“Yes. I'll take you there now. Come on, this way.”

“Oh, yes, yes.”

“Wait! What are you trying to do, just casually walk past me and leave me here? Hey, stop!”

Shou followed Minamida out of the infirmary, and Miron followed, and the three of them walked out of the school.

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Minamida brought Shou to a place not far from where his tent was set up - under a huge tree that stood out from the rest of the jungle.

“Minamida-san? Is this... ...?”

“Yeah. I know at first glance it looks like just an ordinary tree. This is the entrance. It's an easily recognizable tree, so it's a good landmark, right?”

“I see... ... But the entrance is... ...” Shou looks up at the huge tree that Minamida tapped; it's certainly an easily recognizable landmark at this size, but what the hell does entrance mean?

“Miss Miron... ..., you didn't have to come, though.”

“Huh! It's so sweet that you're trying to get rid of me now. I'm not going to let something like this pass me by!”

“Well, ..., Kukoma, put your right hand on this tree.”

“Oh, okay.” Shou's right arm disappeared as if a ring of light had been sucked into it, and he fearfully pressed his hand against the tree trunk. Then, Shou's body instantly disappeared from the spot.

Minamida followed suit, and then the Cabbits followed and disappeared. In the blink of an eye, Miron was the only one left in the place.

“What?! Wait, what's going on? Miron rushed up to the tree but hit her head on the thick trunk and collapsed on the spot.

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The place where Shou arrived - it was a large hall, as big as a school gymnasium, with all kinds of mechanical equipment. There was a slight chill breeze flowing through the air, and his voice seemed to resonate well against the wind. “Wow ..... is amazing. Looks like a secret base. .....”

As he was slowly looking around, Minamida and the Cabbits also appeared behind him.

“What do you think? It's quite a spectacular place, isn't it?”

“Yes! It kind of makes me feel like I've encountered aliens!”

“Haha, I know what you mean. I used to be like that too.” Minamida smiled somewhat nostalgically at Shou, whose eyes lit up.

“That tree you just saw is actually a transporter. Only those with a special code key can enter. So, Miss Miron can't get in.”

“I see. ..... A transporter is sounding more and more like a space civilization.”

“Yes, it is. And here's the maintenance area for you. The girls each brought their own guild staff, but Kukoma-kun doesn't have any. So, you'll have a special group of girls to staff it.”

“Girls?”

“Yeah. Come on, guys.” Minamida said, and the Cabbits jumped up and down and gathered around Shou.

“Are they ... ... these girls?”

“Yeah. I'm sorry I'm late introducing them to you. But I'm sure you'll be able to count on them.”

“Huh. ..... Um, yo, nice to meet you?” Shou said with confusion, and one of the Cabbits - M - started speaking in human language.

“Hmm. I thought that look in your eyes was incredulous. You're wondering what small animals like us can do.”

“Oh my god, she' s talking!”

The four Cabbits chuckled as Shou backed away, and Minamida chuckled, “Haven't you heard them speak before?”

“Oh, yeah, well, I saw them on ... ... once before, and, well, how come they can talk? I knew they weren't from Earth, but... ...?”

“Hmm. Okay, then I'll show you something special.”

The small Cabbit - M's body seemed to grow in size as it was enveloped in a pale light, and then it took on the shape of a person, an adult woman who was taller than Shou. However, she had turned her back, so he couldn't see her face. Instead, her rear - her buttocks - were in full view, but he couldn't afford to pay attention to that right now.

“Haaa! .....!!!? !?!!?” Shou was too startled to speak, he just stood there with his mouth agape and couldn't even blink.

“Does this help a little, Shou-kun?” M's lustrous voice made Shou nod his head in exasperation. Satisfied, M transformed back into her Cabbit form.

Was he dreaming? However, when he slapped himself as hard as he could, the intense pain revealed that what he had just seen was not a dream. Minamida, Cabbit and the others were appalled by the sudden action.

“A, are you okay, Kukoma-kun? Well, it's not so easy to accept... ...”

“Huh. It's very similar to when ... ... Minamida-kun came to the Academy.”

“Haha. Please take it easy on me, senpai.” Minamida laughed wryly, then looked at Shou, whose eyes were still glazed over, and said, “I'm sorry, Kukoma-kun. I'm sure you already know this, but these girls have a lot of secrets. I can't talk about it in detail right now, but you'll just have to understand that's the way it is.”

“Ha, ha .....”

In the first place, it was a surprise to see a creature that was neither a cat nor a rabbit, but it seemed that these Cabbits could speak human language, and in fact, could even take human form. Of course, Shou was not ready to accept such a fantastic reality, but the situation had become a war game with aliens on a ridiculous scale. For now, he just had to believe and accept

the story.

“So, Kukoma-kun. I'm a neutral party and this is the only time that I'm allowed in here. So, I'll go ahead and explain the detailed rules regarding the fight.”

“Huh? Ah, yes.” Shou replied reflexively. Then, in front of their eyes - a huge, translucent screen appeared. There was a map of the entire island on the screen. The map was divided into squares as if it were a strategic simulation game, and the squares were distributed in various colors. “Is this .....?”

“Yeah, it's a strategic map for combat on the island. Here, look at this. These hexagonal squares are the battle area. There are currently four teams in the battle - well, five since you joined. The squares are color-coded, but this is the color of each team. In other words, the team with the most colors has the upper hand. And since Kukoma-kun has just joined the team, his area of influence is limited to this square where your base is located.” Minamida pointed to a white square with a red dot. “The red dot is each team's base point, and this is a non-combat zone. You can't attack any units here, and hostile units can't enter. It's your base, so to speak.”

“Wow, ... is kind of like a game, isn't it?”

“Yes, it might be an easy system for you to get into, Kukoma-kun.”

“Yes. Well, what about the other places? Can I enter squares that are a different color from my team?” Shou pointed, indicating the other squares, which Minamida quickly returned.

“No, you can enter anywhere except your opponent's base. Just remember, if the block is the same color as your base, you'll get all sorts of advantages. For example, if you don't move from that position, you'll be stealthy and undetectable by the enemy radar. In this case, of course, you will be visible, but it's also useful for setting traps, repairing damage to yourself or your guardian if you can't get back to base, or sniping. That's why it's useful to have a lot of squares of your team's color.”

“I see... ... ... So, I'm at a significant disadvantage now, right?”

“Yes, you are. However, there's a certain number of blocks each team can have. Of course, you can rewrite the keys in each block, so you can make it your own block, or even return it to being colorless and transparent, belonging to no one.”

“Hmmm... ... ... so it's like a battle of wits, right?”

“Yes, it is. And as for the defeat conditions for each unit, basically the only conditions are death and surrender. However, no unit has been defeated as of yet, though.”

“Death or surrender, is it?” Shou gulped, the words containing a real sense of dread.

“Well, Kukoma-kun, your battle begins with this one square... ... How about it? Do you think you can do it?”

“Ah, ha ha ha... ...” Shou looked at his only block on the map and smiled weakly. If all the teams were to start taking up positions at the same time, Shou would definitely be at an overwhelming disadvantage, as he had joined late. And unlike the girls, he was the only one who could do it. Although he joined with great enthusiasm, the future looked a little bleak indeed.

“Don't worry, Shou-kun. We'll take care of it, that's what we're supposed to do.” M said confidently, even though she looked like a Cabbit, she was a being from a super civilization in space. This was very reassuring to Shou right now.

“Ah ... ..., yes. Thank you very much.”

“Hey, Minamida-kun. If you've finished your explanation, then get out of here.” The Cabbits shooed Minamida away with their long ears, and Minamida turned towards the transporter gate with a look of relief on his face.

“Okay, guys, I'll take care of the rest, and I'll leave Kukoma-kun in good hands.”

“I understand. You might want to use the other exit when you leave. There's still a hungry golden bear at the previous entrance.”

“Haha, got it.” Minamida smiled and nodded in response to M's warning, and it was strange to see a grown man being told what to do by a Cabbit with a tone of caution like a mother or sister. “Well, good luck, Kukoma-kun. If you need anything else, I'd be happy to hear from you too.”

“Oh, yes. I understand.”

“Yeah, I'll see you later.” With that, Minamida lightly raised his right hand and walked into the transporter gate, his figure instantly disappearing. Shou was surprised to see the scene. He hadn’t been able to see it earlier because he was the first to be transported, but his surprise turned to excitement when he realized that it was really a transporter.

That left Shou and the four Cabbits.

Shou looked at the Cabbits one by one again, but he still couldn't distinguish between them. He didn't know what to call them, so he could understand now why Dird wanted to write on her forehead.

Perhaps sensing the troubled look on Shou's face, M, who was showing leadership among the four animals, spoke up. “You look like you're not sure how to interact with us yet. Well then, since we're here, let's start with a simple self-introduction.”

“Huh? Ah, yes. That would be very helpful.” Shou adjusted his posture firmly and followed M's words with a chuckle.

“I'm M. I don't think you'll be able to tell us apart from the way we look... ... Well, we have very different personalities, so I'm sure you'll get used to us.”

“Ha, yes... ... Well, Minamida-san can tell the difference, can't he?”

“Yes, he can. I've known ... ... Minamida-kun for a long time. Then, next, F-chan?”

“Ha~y! I'm F. It's nice to meet you. Shou-oniichan!” F replied cheerfully and stretched one of her ears with a smile. Her voice sounded somewhat child-like. Shou said, “Nice to meet you!” F laughed and said, “Haha, that's funny.”

So, M put in a light comment. “This girl is the youngest. She's kind of childish, but thanks to that, she's easy to tell apart.”

“Ah, yes.”

“Then, K is next.”

“Yes. I understand.” The next person to give a small ear lift was K-chan.

“I'm K. I'm sure you're feeling a bit confused all of a sudden, but ... ... let's do our best together. It's nice to meet you, Shou-san.”

“Oh, yes, it's nice to meet you too!” Shou hurriedly bowed his head in response to K's polite bow.

K was different from the brisk M and the energetic F. She was somewhat mature and calm, with a soft atmosphere. Shou got the impression that she was an older woman with a lot of time on her hands.

“The last one is D.”

“... ... ... regards ... ...” D did not raise her ears in response but bowed her head a little further away from the other three. It seemed that D was a bit quiet and cool.

“I guess that's it for introductions. What do you think, Shou-kun? Do you recognize me now?”

“Oh, yes. You can tell a lot by the way each of you speaks. ― So, it may be a little rude, but I would like to ask you a few questions... ...”

“What? No problem.”

“Well, ..., well, I was wondering what kind of people you all are... ... Is there a species in the universe that speaks human language and can transform like you guys?”

“Oh, I see what you mean.” M laughed wryly, F and K had the same reaction, D remained expressionless.

“We're special, there's no such thing as a race of Cabbits that can understand human language like us. We're special, we all have astral, that's what makes us different from other computer units, but you wouldn't know it from ... ... Well, I guess it's easier to say artificial life forms.

“Artificial life form ... ...? Well, what is astral, ...?”

“It's a soul. We have merged our astral ... ... or soul into this Cabbit body, but ... ... well, that's a secret. Maybe I can tell you about it sometime.”

“Oh, I see... ... So, what is your relationship with Minamida-san? You said you've known each other for a long time. .....”

“That's a private question, so I' m not going to answer it. But if you win this battle and get the right to go to space, you may learn about it later. Look forward to it.”

“Oh, sorry, I'm sorry. I was wondering what you all thought about Minamida-san and Miron-sensei.”

“Oh, I see what you mean. I have a problem with that woman ... ... But there are a lot of people around Minamida who are even worse.”

F, K, and D nodded their heads in agreement with M. Apparently, they too were having a hard time.

“Well then, Shou-kun, let's finish these introductions and start adjusting the Guardians. Do you mind?”

“Ah, yes. I look forward to working with you.”

“Yes. Then come over here.”

Shou's nervousness increased at once, and as he followed M and the others, he asked another question. “Oh, by the way, what is a Guardian anyway? I've been using it without really understanding it at all... ... The girls were using was also a Guardian, right?”

“Yes. A Guardian is a force field body of energy that you wear on your body. Originally it was a highly functional garment to protect the body. Now they're mostly operated as weapons.”

“Wow... ... Clothes are now weapons, huh? ... ... It's an amazing science fiction world... ...” Shou recalled the time when he fought Dird and the others; surely with that much power, it would be possible to use it as a weapon.

“Shou-kun, when you came to this island, you took some medicine at Miron's place, right? Actually, that medicine was the nanomachines needed to generate the Guardians.”

“What? Really, I didn't know that! Shou was surprised by this shocking fact, and it was only then that he realized that he, a mere ordinary person, had been able to activate the Guardian at that time. Then Shou and the others arrived in front of a circular platform. There were many machines set up nearby, but he couldn't understand what they were.

“Now, Shou-kun. Can you stand on top of that?”

“Yes, sir.” Shou did as he was told and stood on the table.

The jewel on M's forehead lit up, and a schematic-like diagram appeared on his entire body, and

then a humanoid energy body appeared to surround him. Then, in front of him, small blocky objects combined and gathered to form one large wall.

“Whoa, hey, something just came out.”

“Shou-kun. Try sticking out your hand like you're going to punch that wall.”

“What, like punching it? Following M's words, Shou thrust his right hand vigorously toward the wall in front of him. Then, the Guardian that had been generated from Shou's body traced Shou's movement and drove a large fist into the wall, which easily shattered and disappeared.

“Wow, great .....!”

“Yeah. But as I said before, Guardians were originally for protection. So, if your opponent also has a Guardian, you can't hurt them with a punch like you just did.”

“Oh, so that's why Dird and the others each had a weapon?”

“That's what I mean. They also customize their Guardians according to their own tactics and preferences. Well, as Minamida and I were talking about earlier, are you good at games, Shou-kun? How about shooting games or action games?

The topic came out of nowhere. Shou was puzzled by the sudden topic. “Well, I like RPGs and the like, and I don't really play ... ... shooting games or action games. It's not like I'm good at ... ..., is it?”

“Yes. So, let's try a simulation for now. That way you can check your aptitude. We'll start by setting up the controller.”

“What? Whoa!” Shou, who has been in a constant state of amazement since earlier, saw two round objects in his hand that had a hard feel to them. Each of them had buttons on them. It looked like a spherical mouse.

“Hold it. I think there are two buttons on your thumb, the right one is Vulcan and the left one is Sword while you hold it down.”

“Hey ... ..., that's not the same one I used before, is it?”

“Yes. When he first used the Guardian to fight the girls. It didn't have a button like this.

“Yes. I thought it would be easier to use this way, so I customized it for you. Now, go ahead and try it out.”

“I see... ... It's like a game controller, but easier to use. I understand.”

Nodding to Shou, M continued to explain. “Since we're assuming a ground battle at first, I've made sure that the Guardian's controls trace Shou-kun's body movements, just like how you punched the wall earlier. I'll give you a target, and you can try to destroy it without weapons at first.”

“Right, got it.” Shou's heart began to pound, and even though it was a simulation, a sense of tension ran through his body.

A block appeared in front of Shou, and it transformed into a simple doll. Shou tried punching and kicking, but since he was an amateur fighter, his movements were naturally awkward and unskillful. Shou himself knew that very well, and he felt a little embarrassed to be seen by the Cabbits looking so uncool.

“Don't worry about it, Shou-kun. This is just a Guardian adjustment. Yes, the next step is to attack the enemy with the Vulcan. After that, approach and melee attack with your sword. Understood?”

“Yes, yes!”

“Hmm. Then we'll do a more realistic simulation.”

Then the scenery outside was projected on the surrounding walls, and a collection of blocks in the shape of the same dolls as before flew in from the distance. It was as if the inside of the base had instantly become a battlefield.

“Whoa! It's really, really amazingly realistic!”

“Look, there's a lot of them coming, Shou-kun!” M said, and Shou looked ahead, hurriedly manipulating the controller in his hand.

The first thing he did was to fire the Vulcan. But the enemy avoided it with a flutter and approached him without dropping most of their speed. So Shou continued to attack with his unfamiliar sword, but most of his attacks were also avoided. He was desperate to track the enemy with his eyes.

“Shou-kun, look at the enemy carefully! Pay attention not only to the front, but also to the sides and back!”

“Yes, yes!” He replied, but he was at the mercy of the enemy and was in a panic...

And so Shou repeated several patterns of combat simulations, from simple to complex, for a little

over an hour. Shou hadn't been paying attention to the passage of time during the battle, but when it was over, he was surprised to find that only a little more time had passed.

“OK, Guardian synchronization is normal, K, can we move on?”

“Yes. There's nothing wrong with your physical.”

“Okay. Shou, good luck.”

“Yes, sir!” And so Shou went through many simulations with M and the other Cabbits in order to get used to the Guardian system...

“Hah, hah ..... hah .....” About two hours later, Shou was slumped on the sofa, wiping off his sweat with a towel and sipping on the sports drink that the Cabbits had prepared for him. The Cabbits were gathered in front of the machine terminal, looking at the monitor and discussing something.

Eventually, they finished their conversation and the girls popped over to Shou. “Good work, Shou-kun. We've got a lot of data. It's our first day, so we should leave it at that.”

“Yes, sir. Thank you for your hard work. .....” Shou's face did not clear up. Maybe that's why M and the others nodded their heads in wonder.

“You know, ..., I'm a little unsure about this. When I think of the way Dird and the others fought before, my movements were not even close to... ...”

“Shou-san. There's no way you can do it all at once. Please don't be so depressed.” K offered some words of comfort, but they made Shou feel even more miserable.

Then M asked. “So, do you want to get off after all?”

“... ... it is.” Shou's feelings were telling him that he didn't want to quit. But it was true that he wasn't sure, and he felt very ashamed of himself.

“Huh... K is right, Shou-kun. Besides, the customization of the Guardian is still in its infancy. It's a lot of work to be able to evade, defend, and attack, but even Dird and the others aren't doing it all on their own. Of course, Shou-kun himself needs to train more.”

“Yes ... ... Is there any other training I can do besides simulations?”

“Yes... ... In your case, the first thing you should do is increase your basic physical strength. But for this, I suggest you continue with your current lifestyle. Even though you're doing the housework, finding food, and having Dird and the others help you, that alone should be pretty hard work.”

“Ah~ ... ... You're right, I still have a lot of sore muscles... ...”

“You should try to be a little creative in your daily work. For example, when you're poking a harpoon, try targeting a fast-moving fish, or dive a little deeper. There are many things you can

do, like picking fruits from tall trees. And now that you have the Guardian, even if you fall out of a tree, you won't get hurt."

"I see. ....." Shou hmmm'd at M's opinion and decided to try to incorporate it right away.

"But you have to be careful, M-chan. It's true that it's good to not get injured, but to do so recklessly, or to get so used to it that you lose your sense of urgency, is the most terrible thing in a fight." K came into the conversation as if to chide her.

M responded with a straightforward, "That's right," and then continued.

"Then, let's keep the Guardian's activation level to a minimum."

"? What do you mean by minimum?"

"For now, it's just the level to avoid brain damage."

"Ugh, ... I'll be careful." Although Shou announced his participation in the tournament with vigor, he felt a little uneasy.

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At the time Shou was working hard on his training. In that dimly lit room, a blonde woman in a white coat - Miron - was elegantly sipping her coffee while listening to the voice coming from the other end of the communicator.

"Hmm. So, you're finally ready to do this, huh?"

"Anyway, I guess the first step is clear."

The voices belonged to stolid old men, and Miron had been interacting with them for some time now, but she was getting tired of hearing these gruff voices every time.

"Hmph. It's so frustrating to be swayed by the whims of a child! Which, if you're so inclined, is just fine. I'll throw him into my Army and train him from the ground up."

"Wait, wait. If there was a time frame to spare, that might be a good idea, but ... ... with the current situation where only short-term training is available, that could be counterproductive. This game isn't organized combat like the military, you know."

"Mmm... ... that too, Miron Pham, what do you think?"

Asked, Miron placed her cup of coffee on the table before answering. "Well, in terms of initial training, I don't think we're in a bad spot right now. Besides, his physical vulnerabilities are being compensated for by the Guardian system."

"Then how about the mental side? He's just a kid, right?"

"Yes, he is... ... Just like Minamida, he's fun to tease."

“... ... I don't have time to listen to your jokes right now, though.”

“I can't really explain it, but I think the atmosphere is somewhat similar to Minamida's.”

“That's why you're joking!”

“Well wait, Miron, does that mean that he has similar powers ... ... to that hero who destroyed the pirates?”

Miron took a breath before replying to that question. “He says he was just the catalyst for that, though. But ... ... you're right. It's not about the person's ability, it's about that vague ... ... something that influences and changes the flow of the world around you just by existing. I'm sure you can feel it in him. I think it's called charisma.”

“Hmm, nonsense. That's the stuff of the occult, isn't it?”

“But there are certainly leaders who rely on divination, you know. Their science and technology are like magic to us. In other words, it's like the occult.”

“It seems that there is a clear scientific basis for such things, though.”

“... ... Hun. Oh well. Either way, we can't do anything about it. The only thing we can do now is watch the process. It's so frustrating!”

“I never thought I'd hear you say something like '... ... let it happen'. I'm sorry to hear that, but it can't be helped. I'm sorry for your loss.”

“Hmph.”

Miron could sense the resignation in the men's words. And strangely enough, she somehow felt that a better future would open up if that one boy held the fate of the Earth in his hands rather than them standing on the front lines.

“Anyway, the only person from our side who is allowed to stay there is that young lady. I'll be asking for regular reports from now on.”

“We'll do our best, uncles.”

“Miron! That's why you can't talk to me in a way that makes fun of me...”

“Mumble.” After forcibly cutting the communication, Miron yawned and sipped her coffee again.

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Meanwhile, at that time...

“..... Huh. Thanks to the attention of the nuclear submarine, we managed to sneak in without being noticed. .....” The jungle of the island - in one corner of it, there was a woman hiding in

plain sight. Her hair was golden under her hat. She was tall, her body wrapped in camouflage, was really glamorous, and she was very beautiful. However, her sharp eyes clearly indicated that she was not a civilian.

“Anyway, first of all, I'd like to see that girl as soon as possible, but ... ... we'll have to move more carefully than ever from here... ...” The woman quietly moved both of her eyes to check the area, paying attention to even the slightest noise, and began to move slowly with her trained movements... ...

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Beginning the next day, Shou was more enthusiastic than ever about housework and finding food. With minimal help from Dird and the girls, Shou did as much as he could on his own. In the end, this led to a better life for Shou, so it was not too much of a mental struggle. However, the girls seemed appalled at the sight of Shou.

During dinner that night, they asked Shou about it.

“Hey, hey, Shou, you've suddenly started working hard, haven't you? What's wrong with you?”

“Mmm?” Shou, who was very hungry after exerting so much energy, couldn't answer right away because he was gobbling up fish and shellfish, so he chewed well and swallowed before finally answering. “──Puh-uh. Hmm, I can't fight as well as everyone else at all. I was told that I should have a good daily life to build up my strength.”

As Shou replied, Alea nodded her head in agreement. “You're right, Shou, you don't look much stronger than me. Are you a city boy?”

“I don't think that's something Alea would say... ...”

“I'm not sure what to say. I'm not sure what to make of this. Hey Shou?”

”No, that's not true! I'd rather have a physically strong young man! Hey Shou?”

Shou could only laugh and mumble a few words, because no matter how he answered, he felt like he would get into trouble.

It was Palty who lowered her eyebrows anxiously. “Shou, I think it's good to build up your physical strength, but ... ... please don't overdo it, okay? If you break your body

because of it, it won't be good for you... ...”

“Yes, thank you Palty, but I want to try a little harder now.” Shou's positive words made the girls look a little strange. (If I work hard, I might be able to save ... ... everyone from having to fight. That's why I have to be desperate now so that I can catch up with everyone, even if only a little!)

“Good! I'll get more strength and start working harder tomorrow! Oh, Dird, please teach me how to catch fish again!”

“Huh? Uh-huh. That's good, but ... ...”

“Hey, Shou, seriously, what's going on?”

“I think I can kind of understand ... ...”

“Hmm. We have to work hard to keep up with Shou, too.”

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In the midst of living with the girls, going to school, doing housework and searching for food, Shou continued to train with the Cabbits, and the customization of the Guardian was going well.

And on this day as well, from evening to night, Shou was training inside the base and discussing this and that with the Cabbits.

“I see. So, you can have the Guardian automatically perform basic attacks, defense, and evasion?”

“Yes. If we change the combination of patterns, it will be able to last a certain number of times, but then it will always be able to read your movements at some point. That's why Shou-kun needs to be able to make decisions and move on his own. That's why I don't dare to set the Guardian to automatic right now.”

Following M who said that F continued.

“Yes, yes. But if we make it so complicated that it's hard for people to read our movements, then Shou-oniichan's body won't be able to keep up~. If he loses consciousness because of that, it's game over!”

“But Shou-san has that sound weapon, you know. If you use it in combination with that, I think you can manage to fight Dird and the others.”

“... ... In the meantime, we'll proceed with the training... ...”

K and D continued to give their opinions, and M, the summarizer, nodded and announced.

“Right. That's all the training we can do at this point, Shou-kun, the rest is up to you. It's up to you, Shou-kun. How well you can act calmly will be important.”

“..... Okay.”

The next battle would begin soon. All he could do before that was train. Lack of training was a given, but there was no time to lament about it.

What Shou could do now was to get used to fighting. And the most important thing was to not lose.

The fight against Dird and the others was also a form of training, learning how to handle the Guardian and gaining strength. In the meantime, he would continue to train and grow. If he did that, he would eventually be able to catch up with Dird and the others. That was the thinking of the Cabbits.

“Well then, I'm going to train some more! Will you accompany me?” Shou declared with great enthusiasm, but M and the others' expressions were grim.

“M-chan!”

K called out. M looked at K and K shook her head. M said, “I'm sorry, but I don't know if I can do it.

“... ... I guess. Let's call it a day, Shou-kun, get some rest.”

“Yes, but not for long.”

Shou was in a hurry, and D interrupted.

“Shou, you ... ... just don't realize it, but your reaction value has dropped considerably.”

“Yeah, ...”

“Yes, Shou-san, anymore and you'll be overtraining.”

“Shou Onii-chan. It's also important to rest, you know?”

“... ... ... Yes.”

Shou was admonished and depressed.

“Shou-kun. I think poking fish with a harpoon is more useful for training than simulations right now, and F is right, it's also important to rest your body well before your next training session.”

“... ... I understand. Thank you all again for your time today.” Satisfied, Shou bowed and headed for the transporter gate to return to the surface.

The four remaining Cabbits let out small sighs of relief.

“But it's his first time, isn't it? He looks just like he did when he first came to the GP Academy.” M says in a somewhat happy tone.

“But there's still too little time, isn't there ... ... No wonder Shou-san is in a hurry.”

“That's right, Shou-niichans talent is just below average. Instead, the waves of ups and downs are small, so it's nice to have a high degree of certainty!”

K and F continued to say this, and finally D blurted out.

“... ... Just one thing from the data so far.”

“?”

When the other three animals questioned, D used a mechanical terminal to display Shou's battle data on a monitor. On it were detailed information values for attack, defense, and evasion.

“... ... damage value based on number of bullets landed, destruction damage value based on hits.”

M, K, and F paid attention to D's mumbling.

Then, “What?” The three of them exclaimed in astonishment at the same time.

“His evasion rate is terrible, but the damage taken by ... ... is far less!”

“On the contrary, the attacks he hit are few, but the damage value to your opponent is very high. What does that mean?”

“Wow ... ... look at this, ladies! Shou Onii-chan, the weapon selection and shield switching are all based on the characteristics of the opponent!”

The Guardian's weapons had various characteristics such as penetration, impact, vibration, and high heat, and their shields also had corresponding compatibility values.

The Cabbit's were once again surprised by this fact. “What is it? This abnormal value is .....!”

M hurriedly started checking Shou's investigation report. It looked like a resume, but it contained nothing out of the ordinary, nothing noteworthy about it. There was even a sad feeling that if he used it in his job search, it would be a waste of time.

And finally, the remarks column. Perhaps there wasn't much to write about, but there was one sentence attached to it, almost apologetically.

I am unusually strong at rock-paper-scissors.

“... ... ... Oh, I see.”

The Cabbits nodded and murmured as if they had guessed something.

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It was evening of that day. In the midst of the island, which was turning reddish-brown, Shou

and the girls were sitting around the fire in their usual spots, preparing for dinner. Shou, however, stood idly for a few more minutes, holding the shellfish he had picked.

She must have wondered about that. Dird called out, “Shou? Shou~? Hey, are you okay? Are you nervous?”

“Huh? Oh, no, I'm fine, Dird! The shells fell out of Shou's hands as he was startled by the voice, and he hurriedly picked them up.

“Hmmm? Shou, you look a little strange, are you ok?”

“Well, it can't be helped, tomorrow is Shou's debut game.”

“Shou... ... moderate nervousness is good, but don't get too stiff... ...”

“That's right Shou, it's your first fight, so I think it's best to take it easy and just get used to the fight.”

“Uh, yeah... ...”

As expected, Shou's sentiments seemed to be known to the four of them. Perhaps in sympathy with the girls, the chicks in the incubator - Pī and Piyo - were also crying louder than usual.

“I was a little scared the first time I went into battle, too.”

“What? Dird too?”

“Yes. But I think I felt better after I realized that it's okay to get injured. After that, it even became a little fun!”

“It was fun... ...” Shou was appalled by the smiling Dird.

“Well, you know. When you know you're almost never going to die, all you have to do is give it your all. It's a bit of a bummer to think that the fate of the guild rests on our shoulders, though.”

“Because there's only so much ... ... we can do for the guild.”

“That's true, ... It's not that we don't want to fight if we can help it. But that's not how it works. This is not just a problem for us, it's a problem for the guild itself.”

“Guys, ...” Hearing the girls' opinions, Shou had mixed feelings. Shou already knew what Dird and the girls were carrying, and how big it was. He understood why they kept fighting. But if there is an option to avoid fighting. He thought again about what he could do. It's what he vowed to do when he decided to join this fight. (Yes, if ... ... Dird and the others can't stop it, I'll have to make them stop it... ...!

The girls looked at Shou with awe as he made up his mind and looked at the shellfish in his hands with a serious gaze.

After cooking dinner.

The next day was a “day of battle” and each of them had to adjust and prepare their own Guardians, so the girls didn't eat together, leaving Shou to return home.

“Well, Shou, we're going home. Let's do our best tomorrow!”

“Yeah. Thanks again, everyone.”

“What are you talking about? Shou, do your best not to drop out the first time. I'll pick up your bones, so don't worry~”

“Ah, haha. Please go easy on me ... ...”

Dird shook hands with Alea, and Alea waved to Dird. Dird lingered on until the end, saying, “See you tomorrow, Pī-chan and Piyo-chan~,” but Alea pulled her along, and the two disappear into the jungle.

“Shou, don't go easy on us... ... Don't forget that... ...”

“Yes. No matter how much Shou, we'll do our best to face you. So, Shou, please come at us with all your might with the intention of defeating us.”

“Apuesta... ... Palty... ...” Shou sensed that it was the kindness of the two girls. Because the eyes of the two who were alerting him in this way were sincerely concerned for Shou. “Thank you. I'll do the best I can.”

Satisfied with his words, Apuesta and Palty also disappeared into the forest, following Dird and Alea.

So, all that was left was Shou and the chicks in the incubator. And then...

“It's going to be so quiet without Dird and the others, isn't it?”

“Teacher .....”

It was Miron who came out from inside the tent.

“Shou-kun. How about tomorrow? Do you think we'll have a good fight?”

“That's ... ... indeed, I'm not sure. But I'm going to do what I can.”

“Huh? Shou-kun, you're starting to look a little better, aren't you?”

“What? Is that so?”

“Yes. You've become more manly and fearless. But you're still just a kid, right?” Miron grinned and fanned the liquor bottle, giving him a wry smile, but also cheering him up a bit.

“Sensei, can you keep an eye on Pī and Piyo for me?”

“Hm? That's fine, but what are you doing at this hour? You've already made dinner, right?”

“I'm restless, so I'll just be a bit more ... ...” Shou said, squirming into his tent, taking off his jacket and putting on a pair of seawater pants underneath. Then he grabbed his snorkel and harpoon and went outside.

“You're so enthusiastic. But the big day is tomorrow, remember? Don't be too hard on yourself.”

“Okay. I'm off then!”

“Piyo!” “Piyo!”

The chicks were running around in the incubator, chasing Shou and making cute noises. Miron picked up the chicks and said, “There you go, Daddy.”

“Haha. I'll do my best!” Shou waved to Miron and the chicks and ran off to the beach.

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“Shit! Oh, you're such a pain in the ass! This is why I hate reports!” Inside the cruiser house, Miron was alone at her desk, tapping away at her computer keyboard. Trying to calm her frustration, she grabbed a cup that was right next to her and downed the coffee in one gulp.

“Phew,” Miron took a breath, and noticed a squeal coming from right beside her. “Huh. I wonder if they're hungry. Little ones.” Miron looked into the incubator that was placed nearby and smiled. That clear smile was a rare thing to see from the usual Miron, however, only Pī and Piyo could see her face now.

“──? Oh my, it's already this late.” She then mumbled to herself as she looked at the clock in the room and saw that it was getting dark outside the window. Miron grabbed the incubator and left the cruiser house to go outside. However, Shou's tent still seemed to be a husk.

“Daddy, you're late~?” Normally at this time of day, he would be enjoying dinner and feeding the chicks. Miron huffed when he noticed that Shou was nowhere to be found.

“──No way!!!” Miron had a bad feeling and headed for the beach like a rabbit. Luckily, she was able to find the figure quickly.

“Shou-kun!” Shou was lying on the sandy beach, unconscious with the lower half of his body submerged in the sea. Miron immediately ran to Shou, checked his pulse, then picked him up and brought him back to the Cruiser House.

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“... ... nn, nn ... ...?”

Shou woke up ten minutes after Miron had put him to bed in the cruiser house. “Hey ..... here's .....” Slowly opening his eyes, Shou raised his upper body to look around. Then he realized that he was in Miron's cruiser. His head throbbed a little.

“Oh my, I see you've noticed.”

“Oh .....Miron Sensei?”

Miron, who was working at her desk, spun her chair around to face him.

“Sensei..... me, how did I end up here...bffa!” He tried to ask. It was because Miron, who stood up and faced Shou was naked under her lab coat. Shou hurriedly turned his gaze and put a towel over his head.

“Hey! Sensei, what are you wearing?”

“Hmmm? You see, I carried Shou-kun, who had collapsed on the beach, all the way here. That's when I got soaked to the bone. I didn't think I'd get soaked by Shou-kun.”

“Please don't talk to me like that! I mean, why did you have to change your clothes just because... what?” Shou was shocked at Miron, as he answered, “Sensei... ...? I collapsed on the beach and ... ...?”

“Yeah. You had a mild case of hypothermia and collapsed. I don't care how warm the ocean is, those t-shirts and bathing suits don't keep you warm, so it was a close call.”

“Um, ... that, uh, thank you ... ... You saved me, didn't you?”

“Yes, I did. You'll thank me for this for the rest of your life. I took off your clothes, wiped you down, and laid you there.”

“Oh, ..., did you make me take my clothes off?”

“Of course not. I did it for you.” Miron folded her arms and slumped over.

“.....”

“Hmm? What is that look on your face, Shou-kun? I see. You don't have to worry about that. After all, seventy percent of Japanese people are incr...”

“Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, ～～～～～～～～!” Shou shouted, covering his own ears so as not to hear Miron's words. “I'm sorry about all that ... ...” Shou calmed down and apologized, still covered by the towel, but unable to look at Miron.

“Don't worry about it. It's not that different from the rest of Japan, as long as you don't do anything...”

“No, it's not that way! I mean I'm sorry for bothering you!”

“You should say things like that when you show your face properly. Oh, I'm talking about the upper face, not the lower.”

“Well, in that case, Sensei, you're the one who needs to put on some clothes!”

“N~? What are you so embarrassed about now? When I warmed up Shou-kun's body, ... Shou-kun rubbed my body all over ... ...”

“I'm not sure what to say. I'm not sure what to do. I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry! I don't remember any of this! I mean!”

“Well, that's a lie.”

“I'm sorry, ... is that a lie?

“Shou-kun, whenever my body made contact with yours, you unconsciously struggled to escape. ... ... In the end, you fell off the edge of the bed and hit your head. I'm so rude.” Miron was furious, but Shou couldn't help but clench his fists.

“Oh ... ... me, good job! I mean, was this headache caused by the bump then?”

“Hm? Oh yes, it was. You weren't injured when you fell on the beach. Come on, Shou-kun. I've already changed my clothes, so you can look at me.”

“Oh, yes.” Relieved, Shou took off the towel and turned to Miron.

What came into Shou's eyes was Miron, who had taken off not only her clothes, but even her lab coat, and was posing in a distressing pose, completely naked.

“What the hell are you doing?”

“Ahahahaha! I'm stuck, I'm stuck!”

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Opposite the sullen Shou, Miron was eating with a big smile on her face. She looked really satisfied and started to eat more and more.

They were sitting in front of Shou's tent ... ... in their usual places, with the fire between them.

“Haha ... ... doing something like that at all. Are you a child, Sensei?”

“My body is an adult, though. See? Especially here, right?”

Miron leaned her elbows on the table to emphasize her breasts. Shou blew out a small “buu!” and looked away, feeling his cheeks getting hot. He gulped down his rice in one gulp and stood up.

“Thank you for the food! Sensei, please put the dishes in the bucket of water over there.”

“Wait. You're not allowed to go into the ocean today.”

“Oh...” Shou was stopped and Miron continued.

“That's right. I can't believe you're still trying to do this the same day you collapsed. You know, Shou-kun, fighting is not something that can be managed overnight. Especially since you're an amateur, right?”

“That's ... ...” Miron was right, Shou thought.

However, Shou's debut match was tomorrow. He couldn't just sit back and do nothing. Besides, he was already feeling much better. That's why he replied... “But, but I'm an amateur, so I can't just do nothing and wait for tomorrow... ...”

“Geez, but you're really stubborn like that. If you really want to go, you can do so after you ... ... push me down!” Miron stood up and spread her hands to block Shou's way.

“Oh, I made a mistake. A mistake. Not until you defeat me! Oh, you're so Japanese.

“Definitely on purpose... ...! Oh God, I'll do it!”

Dumbfounded, Shou took off running, leaving Miron in his tracks. He wanted to get past her and out to the beach.

“Hmph.”

But almost as soon as he started, Miron blocked his path with a soft, lean, leopard-like gesture, and Shou, despite his awkwardness, quickly brushed off Miron's hand and jumped to avoid her foot strike.

“Wow, you're pretty good.” Miron looked surprised.

Shou looked surprised, “I won!” Shou smiled, “I won!” but... “Ouch!” His leg was stuck. It was cramped. Shou fell face-first to the ground and fell silent, while Miron shrugged her shoulders.

A few minutes later; Shou was lying on a beach mat on the cruiser deck, getting a foot massage from Miron.

“Look at you. That's what happens when you push yourself too hard. Now, you're going to be quiet for the rest of the night, okay? Okay?”

“Yes ... ... I'm sorry ... ...”

“All right. Here, I'm done. How's that? It's getting easier, isn't it?”

“Oh, yes. I have no more pain at all. Thank you very much.”

“Ng. I'll let you owe me this time. You'll have to pay me back three hundred times over someday, okay?”

“Three hundred times! I borrowed something outrageous from ... ...”

Shou was shocked, and Miron chuckled as she draped a towel over his shoulders, placed the incubator with the chicks in it in front of him, and sat down next to him.

“Well, I can see why you're so restless before your debut game. Here, look at the faces of your kids and calm down. You're their dad, right?”

“Ah, ...”

“Piyo?” PiyoPiyo!”

It seemed that Miron had seen through everything.

Shou, still lying down, looked at the incubator that was placed right next to him. There were chicks pressing their bodies against the wall of the cage and chirping cheerfully, as if they wanted to get as close to him as possible, and he felt as if Pī and Piyo were cheering him up.

“I've been in the military, so I've been on the front lines a few times. I'm not technically on the front lines because I'm in the medical field, but I've seen a lot of soldiers there. So, you know, just by looking at the body, you can tell to some extent that this guy can't fight any more.”

“..... I see.” Shou sometimes forgot that Miron is a doctor. And she has experienced war. Shou strongly regretted that he had been so stupid as to go ahead without hearing her out.

“From ... ... Sensei's point of view, this fight is like a game, isn't it? Because no matter how injured you get, you'll be healed the next day.”

“Yeah. That's why it's so dangerous.”

“Huh?” Shou asked back, not understanding what Miron was saying.

Miron continued, “If they know they won't die, they'll be reckless, and there's a good chance that the fighters themselves and the people around them will become unstoppable. That's why Shou-

kun must have noticed the discomfort and wanted to stop Dird and the others.”

“Ah, ...” That was certainly true.

“I can understand your thinking, Shou-kun. But, well, I can also understand the pirates' reasons for this form of settlement.”

“Sensei.....”

“Well, there's no need to panic. Why don't you try failing as hard as you can first?”

“What?” Shou looked up at Miron next to her with a surprising expression.

“Hmm? What's with that face?”

“Oh, no, it's ... ..., because if it was Sensei, she would have said, 'Go win even if you die! I was wondering if Sensei would say something like that... ...”

“Well, yeah. If it's a one-shot game, I'd say so and let you be a little reckless. However, the only way to do this is through experience, and you can't plan a good strategy without gathering data on Dird and the other players, not to mention your characteristics. That's why you should run around in the jungle at first and get hurt a lot. Hahahaha!”

“Hee, that's very Spartan ... ...”

Laughing, Miron patted Shou's on the head. Miron's hand, which had been a little rough, stopped at some point on Shou's head.

“Well, anyway, have a safe trip back.” With that, Miron rolled over, and Shou flipped over from his prone position to lie on his back and watch the night sky with Miron.

“... ... That's a beautiful starry sky.”

“... ...Yes.” Shou replied to Miron's words with a straightforward affirmation.

“Really, the night sky on this island is amazing. I was really impressed on the first night, but I think it's even more beautiful now.”

“Yes, Dird and the others came from that place, didn't they?”

“Yes, that's right... ... Dird and her friends are aliens from our point of view... ... If you think about it that way, ... it's really amazing... ...” While answering this, Shou rubbed his eyes. A sudden drowsiness hit him.

“Huh. I know, ...” Miron gazed up at the starry sky that seemed to be sucking her in. Then she blurted out. “I want to go to ... ... that big, wide world ... ..., don't you think Shou-kun?”

“.....” But there was no reply from Shou.

When Miron looked, she saw that Shou had fallen asleep, breathing quietly in his sleep. He must have been very tired.

“I envy you, ...” Miron looked at Shou with kind eyes and gently pulled the towel cover over his body. Then she looked up at the stars again. “Because ... ... you're standing at the entrance to that starry sky.” She said, sadly.

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The next night. Today was the day of the battle.

Shou stood nervously in the gazebo at Miron's cruiser house, checking the time on his watch.

“Huh... ... almost there... ...”

It had been a week since the last battle, and Shou had devoted his time to training. However, he didn't feel as though it had made him any stronger. Rather, he was more worried that nothing would happen in just one week.

Surprisingly, it was Miron who was more nervous than Shou.

“Shou-kun ... ...” She, too, seemed calm, but her arms were folded, and her hands were clenched so tightly that her nails dug into her skin.

“Shou-kun, it's time to go.” Then, from the earpiece of the small receiver attached to his ear, he heard the voice of Cabbit - M at the base.

At the same time, one small firework went off from the center of the island - the mountain. It was a signal for battle.

At last, the battle was about to begin!

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Shortly before that, Shou had been in the underground base receiving final adjustments from the Cabbits.

“Ready? Shou-kun. The main goal this time is to get used to this fight. Don't even think about trying to win by mistake.”

“Yes, sir. I understand.”

M instructed Shou, still using the language of a firm committee chairman. The other Cabbits followed with words to Shou.

“The other side is probably going to take a wait-and-see approach this time, but we're also gathering information about their patterns and habits, so please be careful not to fight too passively, Shou. This time, Shou's Guardian has been adjusted mainly for defense, evasion, and

speed, so I don't think you'll lose easily.

“Ha, yes ... ..., but that's only if I do it right, right?”

K said, and a nervous Shou asked unsurely. Then F interrupted him.

“It's fine! It would be bad if the four forces were to collude, but I don't think that's likely, Shou-niichan. But once we get out of the base map, we're going to keep fighting until our time is up! Don't be too eager to get back to the base!”

“Uh, yeah, I'll do my best.”

“The adjustment is perfect ... ... good luck.”

“Yeah, thanks. I trust you guys.” Shou clenched his fists tightly, his desire to get a good result for these kids intensified.

“That's what I took into account when I set up the simulation training, so don't worry. Have a little confidence, Shou-kun. Besides, we'll be here to monitor and give you instructions, okay? Yes, this is a video device and audio receiver that will project information. Put them on.”

“Yes, sir.”

“Good. Then cheer up and go!”

“Yes, sir! I'll do my best!

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“Yes, ... I have M and the others with me, too. Okay!” Remembering what he had just said, Shou made up his mind. “Miron Sensei, I'm off then!”

Shou activated the Guardian System and generated an energy force field around his body. He jumped straight out of the boat and flew towards the jungle.

“Watch out! Shou-kun!” After seeing Shou off, Miron hurried straight to the cabin of the cruiser, where she was glued to the monitor that was showing the battle situation.

Shou flew over the jungle in his Guardian and looked at the screen on the wearable device the Cabbits had put on him - a small, glasses-shaped monitor.

“It's almost .....”

On the screen was a map of the entire battlefield. Shou, who was staring at the enemy's red dot of light in it, managed to grasp the situation. There were less than ten red dots that could actually confirm the enemy's position. The rest were hidden in the invisible blocks of the opponent's position, and their exact location could not be ascertained. However, their expected movements were faintly displayed as green dots of light, and Shou followed with his eyes as the dots of light turned red and became invisible again, whenever their positions were occasionally identified.

(Calm down, calm down ....., calm down and come ..... as practiced!

The two red dots closest to Shou were rapidly approaching. It was already possible to see them with the naked eye.

“Damn it!” Shou first tried to fire a check shot with the Vulcan, but the enemy didn't seem to be intimidated. But firing at the enemy in actual combat was an important first step in battle for Shou.

“Shou-kun, keep your distance! Avoid close combat!”

“Understood!” Following M's command, he immediately tried to start retreating. But then three new enemy fighters came flying out of the invisible block nearby.

“Whoa!” The first two dots of light were decoys; the remaining three fighters were waiting close by as Shou moved. It was a simple but effective strategy that he could not avoid, as he was at a strategic disadvantage with only one square.

The three new planes immediately opened fire on him. In the meantime, they were allowed to get even closer. And to his surprise, one of them was a familiar face - Apuesta!

“Apuesta!”

“Shou... ..., we'll get him this time!”

Apuesta's guardian was equipped with huge arms again. If caught by it, there would be no way to escape. He had to escape anyway.

“Shou-kun!”

“Uh, whaaaa!” Shou managed to escape from Apuesta's hands by performing a rapid evasion with automatic control, and the display on the monitor switched from a direct view to an overhead view. Shou, unaccustomed to the rapid blurring of vision, would soon become intoxicated, so the monitor switch was to avoid that.

“Shou-kun! Just retreat first! I'm going to get back into position!”

“Yes, okay!”

Apuesta was stunned as Shou ran away as fast as he could.

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“Hmm ... ... suddenly all the fighters came to capture Shou-kun. Apuesta-chan ... ... is a girl who does drastic things despite her pliant face.” M muttered admiringly to herself at Shou's base.

“So, I guess our intentions have been read to some extent... ...”

“No problem! It's still within the expected range, onee-chan!”

“.....” K, F, and D were also staring at the war monitor with different expressions on their faces.

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“Dird, Alea, how do you two see it?” The voice belonged to Palty.

Palty had been following Shou's movements closely in her own block, which did not show up on Shou's radar. Not only Palty, but also Dird and Alea were watching Shou very closely as he evaded Apuesta's attack earlier.

“That one... Shou's engineers seem like good guys... what do you think Dird?”

“Hmmm. I don't know much about operations and such, but that evasion pattern makes me think that they're a GP type~”

“I see... ... I see.” Palty nodded as if satisfied with the two's answer.

The three of them couldn't tell that the technological system that Dird had instantly guessed was actually correct, but Palty, who knew Dird and Alea's eyes well, felt that they were probably right.

“I'd have to look more closely to tell, though! But if it's a GP type, it might be a bit tricky.”

“Well, I'm going to let you go in alone. I'm sure he'll have a staff of his own. Palty, you're not going to let me be the only one to get the information, are you? What do you think?”

“Hmm. I'm going to go check that out now.”

“What? Hey, Palty, wait a minute.”

Palty cut off communication with the two and saw the red dot on her radar heading toward her. ... ... Then, with the power of the Guardian, she made a powerful leap.

“Shou, I'm coming!”

She quickly accelerated toward Shou, who was close enough to catch her with the naked eye. She had been lying in wait all along.

“Whoa! Now Palty! Shou's face trembled in astonishment.

Palty's weapon was a tall sword. Palty's Guardian, which was tuned as a fighting machine, showed its true value only in close combat. Moreover, she herself was a legitimate martial arts user. Shou wouldn't stand a chance in a proper fight.

“Shou-kun! Don't ever go at her in close combat!”

“Damn it .....!?” He tried to run away, but Palty, sped full throttle through the jungle, wouldn't let him get any distance, and Shou quickly found himself on the defensive.

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“That's not good. It looks like they're going to attack us one by one, in their areas of expertise.”

“I knew it... ... I'm going to gather information on this side... ...” Following M, D mumbled something like that.

“Hmm, Palty onee-chan, huh? The technology is based on Jurai, so the evasion prediction works reasonably well, but it's still a bit hard in close combat.”

“Her combat level is quite high. At this rate, Shou-san will be ... ...”

“That's right! We'll be pinned down!” With M's words, the place was filled with intense tension.

As expected, two new Palty team's aircraft had jumped out from the invisible block near Shou.

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“Shou-kun! Evasive maneuvers up in the air!

“Yes, yes!” At M's shouting voice, Shou hurriedly turned and flew up into the sky. But...

“I won't let you get away, Shou!” Palty's quick movements kept her close to Shou.

“Damn it, ..., I've got to do this!” So Shou decided to use the example weapon that he had prepared in the back of his mind.

It was a special acoustic weapon that could reproduce the sound of a blackboard being scratched. He had prepared this when he adjusted the Guardian, and it had already been incorporated into the operation.

“Sorry Palty!”

The Guardian's arm extended, generating that sound!

GIGGY GIGGY GIGGY GIGGY GIGGY GIGGY GIGGY GIGGY!

“Huh! Kyaaaahhhh!”

The sound emanating from Shou's Guardian made Palty cover her ears involuntarily, slowing down her attack, and she fell unsteadily towards the jungle.

Shou took the opportunity to break away. He breathed a sigh of relief, but...

“Shou-kun! Don't let up!”

“!”

M's voice made him tense up again.

“Shou, it's me this time!”

“Dird.....!”

The next to appear was Dird, whose arms and legs were equipped with gauntlets and anklet-type weapons. She seemed to want a completely physical battle.

“Well then, I'll go to ... ...!”

“Whoa, whoa, whoa!”

Dird's wild and irregular attacks were difficult to evade even with the automatic evasion program, and Shou was quickly knocked down into the jungle after being tossed around.

“Whaaaaaaaaat?” Shou managed to stay still on the way, but Dird's attack power was quite strong. Although the Guardian prevented it, even Shou's arm was numb and tingling.

“Dird. That's a messed-up attack, but it's hitting the blind spot of our evasion program! It's a pretty nasty opponent!”

“What am I supposed to do!”

“Calm down, Shou-kun. Anyway, keep your distance from them and stay calm! That's the basic rule, and it's still the same!”

“Ha, yes. But even if you say so!”

“Shou~! It's too late to have a strategy meeting now!”

In the meantime, Dird approached rapidly and punched Shou. Shou managed to avoid the attack by using automatic evasion as well as using his eyes, but there was a limit to how much he could avoid an attack that seemed to have read where he was going to move.

“Damn it, I've got to do ... ...!” So Shou used that sound weapon again here.

GIGGY GIGGY GIGGY YYYY!

That unpleasant sound spread throughout the jungle, and then disappeared.

The sound had shown Palty its immense effect earlier, but Dird, however, was grinning with a nonplussed expression on her face.

“.....? It's not working!

“Pfft... ... ...!” Dird put her hands on her hips with a triumphant look on her face. “That's too bad! I turned off all of the external information sensors just before I left, just in case something like that happened!”

““Eeeeee!” “Eeeeeeee!” Shou and M were appalled at the simplicity of the strategy.

Yes, there were ways to prevent Shou's acoustic weapons, one of which is to block all external information sensors, as Dird had just done. However, this would also turn off all information functions, which would be a dangerous action that would leave them to fight only with their eyes and their own judgment. Dird, however, was in no hurry to speak.

“Hmmm. Let's continue then! Shou!”

“Damn it!” Shou continued to desperately dodge Dird's attacks as she approached again, but then the Cabbit's advised him.

“Don't panic, Shou-kun! That enemy is Dird, try to remember her normal behavior! It's also important to read her attack patterns from her image!”

“Gosh! That's what you said.” As he had been told, he tried to predict the attacks and movements that Dird might make, but her movements were too fast for him to think that far ahead and move his body. However, even so, the rate of getting hit was slowly decreasing.

“M, I can't! I still can't avoid it!”

“That's fine! The hit figures are definitely going down!”

“Muuu ～～～～! Shou just keeps dodging!” In spite of her overwhelming advantage, Dird's attacks gradually became monotonous, perhaps due to her frustration at not being able to attack Shou. A big gap was created there.

“Shou-kun!”

“Yes!” At that moment, when Dird made a large fist. Shou dodged it by a paper-thin margin and firmly grabbed Dird's arm with his Guardian arm.

“I'm sorry, Dird!”

“What?”

The moment Dird was appalled... Shou activated his secret weapon!

GIGGY GIGGY GIGGY YYYY!

“Ngaan Ayan!? Yanyanyanyan !?”

Dird suddenly flailed around, holding her head and running out of control, crashing into the jungle trees - plunging into them.

“Ugh! Oh my god! What was that ～～～～～?” Dird shouted as she fell, and Shou couldn't help but take a guts pose.

“I did it! It worked!”

“You had the best timing, Shou-kun.”

This was an even more secret weapon that they had prepared in case their opponents took countermeasures against acoustic weapons, and although it had the disadvantage of requiring direct contact with Shou's guardian, it would force the opponent to be exposed to sound waves by conducting them directly from the body. As expected, M and the others had anticipated that the opponent would take countermeasures.

That strategy worked, and they managed to neutralize Dird, but...

“Ugh!”

Just when it seemed that things had settled down, something suddenly flew from far away and hit Shou's Guardian - the shield that had been deployed - with a violent sound. It was a long-range shot.

“I knew Alea was here!” Shou immediately knew what to expect, so he was able to react immediately.

That one shot was the signal for a flurry of long-range shots that seemed to come from Alea's team to hit Shou.

“Whoa, whoa, whoa!” Shou dodged them one after another, aided by his excellent evasion program. In the end, only the first shot hit Shou before the storm of bullets stopped.

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“Damn, are you serious!!!?”

Alea was getting impatient. She had been sniping at Shou through her scope from afar, but the only shot that hit was the first one she fired. She had fired with the intention of ending it with that one shot, but Shou had guarded against it with his fast-deploying shield, and all subsequent shots had been avoided.

“Damn, if it wasn't for the fact that the shield's properties killed its power, my one shot would have been the end... ... It was calculated from the start! Shou's mechanics are pretty good!

Dird and the others called out to Alea, who was complaining like that.

“Alea, what are you doing? Alea should be the one to decide!

“It's ... ... rare that Alea can only guess that ... ...”

“That's how well Shou was trained, Alea, don't worry about it.”

“Oh my god, shut up! You guys weren't good at all either!” Alea shouted in response to the girls’ voices in her ear.

Their coordinated plan failed miserably. Finally, one of their team members approached Shou, which triggered the whole thing to turn into a melee as usual.

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“Whoa! There's so many of them!” Shou was surrounded by a large number of enemy fighters, and it seemed that Dird and the others had lost their patience and decided to attack in force of numbers. It was a very simple, but extremely effective strategy against Shou, who was only one man strong.

“Damn it! If this happens, ...!”

GIGGY GIGGY GIGGY YYYY!

Shou immediately uses the sound weapon. But...

“..... Huh?”

The enemy fighters stopped for a moment, but they didn't look particularly flustered.

Grin. Enemy fighters laughing.

And he knew. They had all taken the same measures to turn off their sensors as Dird had.

“Damn it! What am I going to do? Shou panicked, then he heard M's voice in his ear.

“It's okay, Shou, calm down! If they leave their sensors off, they won't be able to follow our evasion program! Wait for your chance!”

“Chance? But, but!” Shou couldn't believe he was being told that. However, there was no time to dawdle, and seeing Shou in a panic, perhaps they judged it as a good opportunity, and the enemy fighters began to move in unison again and attacked Shou with their respective weapons.

“Whoa! Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, ～～～～!” Shou frantically ran for cover, activating his sound weapon in the process, but his opponent had turned off their sensors, making it completely ineffective.

“—— Ah!” But Shou noticed that the enemy fighters were not turning off their sensors all the time, but they were turning them on every once in a while, to get information. In other words, the chance that M had mentioned earlier...

“Don't worry, Shou-kun! You can do it! Believe in yourself!”

“That's right, Onii-chan! Go for it!”

“You can do it, Shou-san. Please aim hard!”

“Your chance will come soon. Look carefully.”

“Yes, yes!”

M, F, K, and D. The voices of the four Cabbits inspired Shou. He circled around again and again, flying through the air in circles so fast that it almost made his eyes roll, but he kept waiting. Just a moment, just the right timing.

“It's coming, it's coming, it's coming ......!” His heart was beating wildly. However, his breathing was strangely calm. And the moment came!

“Now!”

Just as Shou activated his acoustic weapon... All the enemy planes had turned on their sensors at once!

GIGGY GIGGY GIGGY GIGGY GIGGY GIGGY!!!

“Kyaaa

Then Minamida sent the signal to end the battle, and the day's battle came to an end.

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“Wow! That's great, girls! Look at that! All the fighters have stopped moving!”

“Yeah, that's great, Shou-san, you've managed to survive your debut.”

“Still the same disgusting sound ... ...”

“Hmm. As expected, your timing was perfect.”

The four Cabbits that were monitoring at the base were all impressed.

“Basically, I was able to get by thanks to the evasion program, but like when you prevented Alea's long-range shooting, that was brilliant for your first fight.”

“That's right~. Onii-chan, you hardly attacked, but your defense was good!” F said, and they all nodded in unison.

“Also, I had thought of a countermeasure for the sensor off ... ..., but I'm nothing short of amazed that you were actually able to catch that moment. The timing of the trigger was perfect.”

Turning off the sensor would certainly disable the acoustic weapon. But at the same time, it would put a huge handicap on the combat action. That's why the enemy would activate the sensors for a moment, and act based on the information obtained there. With this in mind, M and her team put their faith in Shou's compatibility characteristics and waited for the right moment - the moment when all the sensors of the enemy fighters were turned on.

And Shou did not miss that moment. The timing of the last use of the wide-area acoustic weapon was exactly the moment when the enemy aircraft opened their ears that had been blocked.

“However, the other side has captured quite a bit of information from us this time, hasn't it?”

“It can't be helped... ...”

“Yeah, it's all right, Onee-chan! I got a lot of information too!”

“Right. Now let's hurry up and modify the program for the next battle.”

“Yes!” “Yes!” “Yes.” “Okay.”

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“... ... Haa ～～～～!”

Gong!

Miron's cruiser house. There, after confirming the end of the battle and Shou's safety, Miron

made a loud noise, plopped down on her desk, and let out a long breath.

“How harrowing ... ... you make me feel at all, Shou-kun!” Despite the anger in her mouth, Miron's face was filled with relief. Miron then hurried outside to wait for Shou's return.

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And the next day.

“Shou～～～～ good morning, ～～～～～～～～! Oh, good morning to you too, Pī and Piyo! How are you two?”

“Piyo!” “Piyo!”

“Oh, good morning, everyone.”

In the morning, Dird and the others came to Shou's tent as usual. It was hard to believe that there had been a battle the day before. So Shou tried to be as normal as possible. He couldn't get used to the gap between combat and everyday life.

“Hey Shou, good work yesterday. I'm so beat.”

“Good morning Shou, yesterday was amazing ... ...”

“Good morning Shou, you really surprised me last night. I didn't expect to get beat up so perfectly... ...”

“Haha. It just happened to work; you know. I don't think I'll be able to use that tactic anymore.” Shou smiled shyly, still a little proud of himself because he had managed to end the fight in a stalemate.

“Hmm, so let's continue our conversation over breakfast, Dird, would you mind catching some fish for me?”

“Yes! Shou, come with me!”

“Ah, yes!”

Dird, who had been talking to Pī and Piyo in the incubator, stood up and raised her hand, to which Shou replied with a nod. Everyday life, as usual, had begun.

Under the sunny skies, Shou and his friends were having a hot meal under the dazzling morning sun, and the dinner table with Dird and the girls was so peaceful that last night's battle seemed like a dream.

However, the topic of conversation was all about the battle.

“I didn't think Apuesta would suddenly go out and grab Shou with all her fighters! I was so surprised!”

“Yeah, that's true. It was supposed to be a rock-paper-scissors game where we'd take turns going after Shou, but I'm surprised Apuesta was bold enough to go for the capture.”

“Yes, I was surprised to hear that. Hmm, Apuesta, did you want Shou so badly?”

”No, it's not... ... I thought it would be advantageous to have Shou in the fight... ... So, ... “

“Hahahaha! Apuesta, you're embarrassed, cutie!”

“... ... Damn it! Dird, you forfeited your second helping!”

“What? I'm so sorry! Forgive me, Apuesta~!”

Apuesta turned red and angry as Dird and the others teased her, and a flustered Dird rubbed up against her, causing Shou and the others to laugh in amusement.

“Hmm. But you're right, if we can draw Shou in, we might be able to get an advantage in future battles.”

“That's not an advantage,” she said, “With Shou's deadly sound weapon, we'll have to keep turning our sensors on and off at all times. If Shou had friends, and they targeted us even with the sensors off, we'd be at a disadvantage. It's a good thing he's on his own, because if he hadn't been, the war situation could have changed in a heartbeat.”

“Bullshit... ...”

Shou was slightly crestfallen by Alea's words, but he could tell that the sound weapon was definitely a threat to the girls. That alone made Shou feel that his debut battle was worth it.

Dird finally got Apuesta's forgiveness and asked Shou over another bowl of rice.

“Hey, Shou, you're not going to team up with anyone, are you?”

“Huh? Hmmm ... ...” Shou looked up at the sky as if he was a little troubled. The other three were also waiting for Shou's response with interest.

“Well, I don't intend to do that at the moment... ouch!” Then Shou was suddenly hit on the head and turned around in a panic.

There, Miron was standing there.

“S-sei, Sensei! Why did you hit me so suddenly?

“Oh, Miron Sensei, good morning!”

“Whoa, Miron, your eyes are red.”

“Good morning, ...”

“Good morning, Sensei, have you been sleeping too much?”

Miron, with dark circles under her eyes, clearly looked unhappy and annoyed. Contrary to Dird's innocent approach, the other three all distanced themselves from Miron.

“Yeah, yeah, all night, all night! I haven't slept at all since I've been working on Shou-kun's report!

“Well, I don't care if you say so, but that's Sensei's job, isn't it?”

“Well, after making me worry so much last night, you've come to your senses, Shou-kun! Oh my god, I'm so hungry! Dird, give me that!”

“What? Oh, my second helping of rice!”

Miron took Dird's rice and gobbled up all of Shou and the others' side dishes. And then she fell down on her back and said, “Thanks for the food! Now I'm going to bed, so please take me to school!”

“What? Hey, Sensei! I can't do that...”

“zzzzzzzz.”

“You're fast asleep! Are you Nobi-kun? I mean, you're too free!”

In front of Shou and the others who were appalled, Miron fell asleep really fast. She must have been really tired.

“Wow, Sensei, you really fell asleep.”

“Hey, what are we going to do about this? I don't know.”

“I guess we'll have to take her to ... ...”

“Yes, we can't have a class without Sensei. But I'm not sure if Sensei will be able to teach the class properly today... ...”

“I guess so. Well, anyway, good luck, Shou.”

“Huh?” Shou was confused when Alea slapped him on the shoulder.

“Good luck, Shou!”

“Shou, do your best.”

“Hmm. Please do your best, Shou.”

“..... ee ee ee!?” And so it was Shou's job to carry Miron to school. Shou felt like he was going to die in the morning, but he managed to do it.

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“Good morning, everyone. Today, Miron Sensei is tired and doesn't want to get up, so we're going to have self-study. Please study quietly on your own.” The morning classroom. Palty stood on the stage and explained this to her classmates, and Shou was lying on his desk in a sweat as he listened. The exhaustion was pouring out of him.

“This was the moment when Shou's efforts were in vain.” Alea seated next to him said with a grin, to which Shou replied with a pained look.

“Ugh. ..... Well, thanks to you, I can rest, so I'm grateful. .....”

Surprisingly, however, Shou's efforts were not in vain. Because Miron's classes are mostly for Shou, and not for the rest of the classmates.

Dird and the others were learning subjects from their world, not from Earth. Most of them were far more advanced than Earth, and the knowledge that Shou was learning is like a child's storybook to them. In addition, because of the different levels and types of subjects they are studying, most of them are studying separately at their personal terminals anyway.

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In the end, Shou and his friends continued to study on their own until noon, and then it was time for lunch. Today Shou, along with Mike and Ichiro, were eating at the observation deck with covered tables by the schoolyard.

“Oh ... ..., my back still hurts.”

“Hahaha. It's a pain I envy you, Shou.”

“Huh?”

Mike laughed, and Shou raised an eyebrow in annoyance.

“Because, Shou. I'm sure you've spent the morning in close contact with that Miron Sensei's body, feeling her ample breasts against your back and enjoying the feel of her ass as you walked to school. I'm too jealous of you!”

“No... ... Sure, I had those thoughts at first, but only at first... ... You have no idea how hard it is to carry Miron Sensei by yourself, do you? I really thought about throwing her off several times during the process. I mean, it's not like she's in a hurry to submit a report. It's annoying. Huh. ... ...”

Ichiro said with a wry smile to Shou, who sighed. “But Shou-kun, Sensei probably didn't lose sleep over the report alone.”

“Huh? Ichiro-kun, what do you mean?”

Mike took over the rest of the conversation and answered. “Well, my guess is that Sensei was so excited and worried about Shou that she couldn't sleep. That's what Ichiro is trying to say, isn't it?”

Ichiro nodded; Shou gave him a dubious look.

“Haha, no way. I mean, Sensei was upset that she had to report so many things because I had to join the fight.”

“Hmph. I've known Sensei longer than you, and I'm sure I'm better at sensing a woman's feelings than you are. In fact, the number of times Sensei gets involved with Minamida-san seems to have decreased dramatically.”

“Oh, ..., that's right, ...” Shou thought back, and it was true that Miron was no longer approaching Minamida in a rash manner as before. “Hmm. But what's that got to do with Sensei's lack of sleep?”

Shou asked an honest question, Mike laughed with amusement and Ichiro chuckled, “They say women don't like insensitive men, but I guess that's not so surprising.”

“Shou-kun is very serious, and I'm sure Miron Sensei is easy to get involved with. Besides, that woman is surprisingly childish on the inside, so maybe she's a good match for Shou-kun.”

“I see, that's a good point Ichiro.”

“? I'm not sure, but that means I'm Sensei's plaything instead of Minamida-san, right?”

“Hahaha. That's one way to love, Shou.” Mike laughed, and at the same time, the chime of the end of the lunch break rang out.

“Love, ..., we don't have time for that!” Shou didn't understand what Mike and Ichiro were saying, but he hurriedly stuffed the rest of his lunch into his mouth.

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“Oh, she's heavy... ...” It was after school. Shou was on his way home with Miron on his back, just as sweaty as in the morning.

Miron had woken up at lunchtime, but as soon as she finished her lunch, she started to fall asleep again. So the students spent the whole day studying by ourselves, and Shou had to carry Miron on his back on the way home. Dird was carrying his bag for him, but his strength was already at its limit.

“Hey Shou, Miron will be pissed if she hears that.”

“Haha, Sensei is a big girl, isn't she? Is that why she's so heavy?”

“Shou... ..., are you okay... ...?”

“Ugh, ... might not be okay... ...” Shou's steps were getting slower and slower. Tomorrow, his muscles would be sore all over.

“Uh ... ... guys, can you help me with this ... ...?”

“Hmm. No, Shou, please think of it as training and do your best.”

“Wow, that Palty is an ogre, an ogre. The ones who are always smiling like that are actually the scariest. Let's be careful, Dird, Apuesta.”

“Alea, did you say something?”

“Pyu~pyu~♪” Alea whistled in an obvious and deceptive manner. Palty's smiling face, however, was somewhat frightening and intimidating, and Alea may have been right... ... Shou carried Miron back, thinking about this. Sweat trickled down his forehead.

“Shou, we're almost there! Come on!”

“Shou, I'm confident you're strong.”

“Uh, yeah... ...” With Dird and Apuesta cheering him on, Shou started walking again. Then Shou remembered what the Cabbits had said. It might be a good training to carry Miron like this, in order to gain training in daily life.

“... ... Hey! I'm almost there!” If he forced himself to think that way, he felt a little better.

When Shou arrived in front of his tent, Dird and the others said, “Good work! The weight on his back suddenly disappeared.

“Huh. Thanks for your hard work, Shou-kun!”

“—— Eh?” Shou bent at the waist and turned around to see Miron with her arms folded smilingly. Instantly, Shou's legs relaxed, and he dropped to his knees.

“Ara, you need more training if you're carrying such a light weight like me, don't you Shou-kun? Miron said with a mysterious smile, emphasizing the word “light,” as if she had overheard their conversation earlier.

“But, well, let's give him a reward for making it this far! Hooray!”

With that, Miron uncrossed her arms.

Then, Shou's thin, sweat-soaked blouse clung tightly to her skin, and he could see the sexy sight of her underwear and skin showing through. .....

“What do you think, Shou-kun? You worked so hard, and your sweat made me wet.”

“Uuuuuuuu ... ... did you all know that?” Shou completely ignored Miron, who was posing and wiggling, and shouted at the girls, who were giggling behind him.

“I'm sorry! But Palty wanted to do that for Shou... ...”

“I'm sorry, Shou, we really wanted to help, but ... ... Miron Sensei wouldn't accept our help in the name of Shou's training... ...”

“I'm sorry Shou, but we'll prepare dinner for you ... ... In the meantime, Shou can get some rest at ... .”

“Right. You take care of Miron until then, Shou.”

“What? Wait, guys.”

The four of them scattered, laughing, leaving Shou and Miron alone. Shou looked behind him cautiously.

“... ... Now, Shou-kun? I'm not sure what kind of mindset you have to have to ignore my sexy reward?”

“Ahhhhhhhh, ...!” By that time, Shou no longer had the strength to escape from Miron.

At dinner time, however, Miron was happily humming a tune and picking at a piece of boiled fish.

“Hey Shou... ..., Miron's in a really good mood, what did you do?”

Dird and the others were wondering the same thing, and Shou stopped his chopsticks to answer Alea's question.

“Um, ... well, breasts are nice, but when I told her I liked her butt better, ... she suddenly got in a better mood, ...”

“Haha, I see. You could touch me all the time while you were carrying me on your back.”

“So that's how she interpreted it, that Sensei was already giving you a lot of rewards.”

“... ... Shou, it's still sex.”

“Apuesta~? Shou is naughty?”

“Oh my god, stop it, you misunderstood me! I just used that word to escape from Sensei!”

Dird was puzzled, but Alea and Palty were laughing happily, while Apuesta was staring at Shou. Miron, on the other hand, hadn't even heard it.

“Well, Shou has finally found me attractive. And tonight, Shou-kun is going to have some fun with the hands that have been touching my ass. .....” She mumbled with a mysterious smile on her face.

Hearing this, Dird nodded her head and asked Shou. “? Fun? Hey, hey, Shou~, what's fun?”

“Don't ask me that, Dird!”

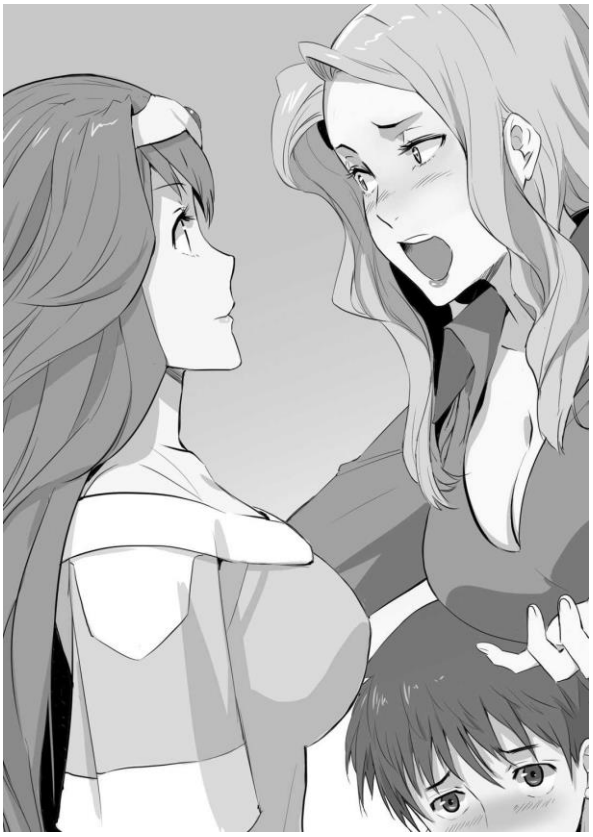
“Shou, please try to keep it in moderation.”

“What?

“... ... Shou's a pervert.”

“Ooohhhh so what are you talking about with that!”

“Well, well, Shou, don't panic. You know that he sometimes secretly washes his pants. There's no need to be so embarrassed now.”



“Ohhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!!!!”

Alea's overly honest words became a thorn in Shou's side, and he ran full speed into the ocean, screaming and diving straight into the water. He started to crawl as fast as he could while screaming.

While staring at Shou, Palty casually murmured. “Shou is old enough to know better. If I were an experienced person, I would be able to take care of him and help Shou vent his feelings... ...”

“Buh-uh!” It was Miron who blew out the beer she was drinking as hard as she could. It must have gotten into her windpipe because she started gagging and choking. The girls, startled by this, all looked at Miron at once.

“Hey, wait a minute! What was that casual bombshell? Palty ... ..., are you in that kind of relationship with Shou-kun?”

“Yes? I'm not sure what you mean by such a relationship ... ...?”

Miron was appalled. “No, I'm asking if you're in a physical relationship with ... ... that's why I'm asking if you're in a physical relationship with ... ...”

Miron looked a little uncomfortable, but Palty still didn't seem to get the point.

Then Apuesta gently tapped her abacus. “Probably because people on Earth have a slightly different view of sex than we do... ...”

Translators note: Sometimes they call Apuesta’s vocalizer a soroban, sometimes an abacus.

“Oh, I see. That's true, Miron Sensei, what is the state of sex education on Earth?”

“Huh? That varies quite a bit from country to country, but ... ... Hey, what? Are you saying that in space, they do practical education? That's why you're so nonchalant!” Miron asked, blushing, and Dird and the others were all appalled.

Palty then answered Miron's question. “Yes, there are many differences between countries and genders there as well, but ... ... most men usually learn the basic flow of the game using a special bioroid. Sometimes they take a course and have a licensed person as their partner, but ... ... each family has their own educational policy and methods vary.”

Miron's mouth dropped open as Palty answered smoothly.

“Well then, what about women?”

“Well, they all take the same courses as men. But the practical skills are different for everyone. They have different functions and roles than men... ...”

“But what does that mean, though? What does that mean? There's no such thing as the first time? Is that what you want?”

“Well, uh, I'm not sure what Sensei means by being confused, but ... ... aren't there many people who think that education and practice are two different things ... ...? Besides, if it's an experience between two lovers, I think there will naturally be a sense of excitement and so on.”

“Yes, yes ... ... I'm not sure if I'm going to be able to do that. You know, if you get into it ... ...”

“We teach not only techniques, but also control of sexual desire and manners of practice, so if there are any problems with that, you will naturally receive a separate program to follow.”

“Oh, really ... ...?”

“Yes. Besides, this depends on the time and environment, but in the ... ... universe, the act of

reproduction between living beings is not absolute. There is artificial insemination, and it is possible to transfer eggs to a bioroid to conceive and give birth. Of course, there are also a great many people who would prefer to have a natural birth."

"Heh, heh ... ..." Miron looked confused, but also convinced; she seemed to have calmed down a bit.

"As far as I can tell from Shou, there's not much difference between men on Earth and men in space, but ... ... the point is that it's important to vent well, which is why Apuesta deals with adult videos. Isn't that right, Apuesta?"

"Uh... ..." Apuesta gave an embarrassed little nod. Miron thought her reaction was normal, but it was unusual for Palty, who looked so innocent, to say such a thing without shame, and Miron was quite upset.

"? Sensei, what's wrong? You're acting a little weird."

"Huh, weird? You're the ones who are weird!"

"No, I think Miron should see a specialist, your approach to Minamida is abnormal even from our point of view."

"Who's crazy? You're so rude! Hmph!" Miron, with slightly red cheeks, started pecking away at her food, apparently not wanting to drag this out any further.

"Ah, this kind of abnormal obsession with the object of interest, and people who don't realize it, is really annoying."

"Yeah ... ... the type that is common in the academy ... ..."

"Maybe it's more common in philosophers and the like."

"Hey, guys. But Shou, hasn't come back yet, has he?"

"Oh."

Dird's voice made the four of them realize this, and they headed to the ocean to check on Shou.

He must have been swimming for a long time. The four of them rushed to save Shou, who had run out of energy and was washed up on the beach.

When Shou woke up, they resumed eating together.

In the midst of the peaceful atmosphere, Dird said, "Ah! Hey, hey, you guys. Tomorrow is our day off from school, right? Let's go to the lake, it's been a while since we've been there! I want to get some wasabi, too!"

"Lake?" Shou asked back, pointing to a mountain in the center of the island. Dird nodded happily and said excitedly.

“You know, in the middle of the mountain where you can see the waterfall, there's a big lake with lots of fish that are different from those in the ocean! There's also a lot of wasabi growing there! Shou, you like wasabi, right?”

“Really? Hmm, I want to go there, but isn't it far?”

“That's okay Shou, we can use the Guardians to get there in no time at all.”

“Oh, I see!” Despite being told this by Alea, Shou was annoyed.

“Oh, but I've been restricted by M and the others from using it. The Guardians can be dangerous if you get too used to them, so they said not to use them too often in daily life.”

“... ... That's correct.”

“Yes, that's true. It can be scary to get too used to it.” Apuesta and Palty both agreed, while Alea pouted her lips in boredom, “Duh.”

“Oh, I see. I'll go talk to M-chan and the others about it! Just wait here~!”

“Eh? Dird?”

Dird immediately got up and started communicating with someone a little further away. Occasionally, she would say, “Please~! and “I'll give you wasabi! and other words of persuasion. Eventually, the communication ended and Dird came running back with a big smile on her face.

“You know what? I asked M-chan and the others, and they said they'd lift the restriction if we only traveled long distances! But they said we can't fly more than 30 meters above the ground, so be careful~!”

“Oh, you convinced theme. Thanks, Dird!”

“Yes! Now we can go together!”

Dird hugged him happily, and Shou was too embarrassed to move. Seeing this, Alea, Apuesta and Palty laughed, and Dird called out to the nearby incubator, “You two can go with us too!

But... there is one person whose expression does not clear.

“Wait a minute!” The one who broke the peaceful atmosphere was Miron, who had been silent for a long time.

“Why are you ignoring me and going on with your story? If the Guardian is moving, I'll be left behind! What are you doing?”

“What? Is Miron coming too?”

“Shit, shit, shit! I'm the only one left out of this group and this atmosphere! I'm your teacher! I'm your guardian! You can call me Shou-kun's guardian. It's impossible for me not to go,

Mookie!

“That's right. What are you going to do?”

Miron was on the verge of losing her temper at Alea's words, when Palty hurriedly said, “So, how about we have Sensei ride in the camping unit, and we'll take care of it? Is that okay with you, Sensei?”

Seemingly convinced, Miron folded her arms and slumped over, “Hmm.” Palty looked relieved.

“Hey, if you're going to have a camping unit, let's spend the night up there!”

Dird happily suggested and Alea said, “Oh. I like that. If we're going to play, I want to go hard! How about Apuesta?”

“Yeah. I agree with ... ... I also want to collect materials for sale there.”

Apuesta nodded and said so, and Palty smiled happily and said, “It's a deal.”

“Haha, camping with everyone, huh? I'm looking forward to it!”

“Yeah! It's going to be so much fun, Shou!”

“Hmm. Then let's finish our preparations today so that we can leave early tomorrow. We'll disperse after eating and meet here to get ready. The time will be about an hour after ... ... I'll arrange the camping units for you. Then dismissed.”

With Palty's voice, Shou and the others dispersed and went back to their homes to prepare for the day ahead.

About an hour later.

Shou and the others had gathered in front of Shou's tent again. All of them were carrying various kinds of luggage on their backs and shoulders.

What Shou saw there was a bus-sized camping unit. Since he had never actually camped in such a vehicle, he was gasping in admiration at the novelty and excitement of it. Palty chuckled when she saw Shou.

“We've been lent a spare unit. Everyone, are you ready to go? If you forgot anything, please go get it while you can.”

“ Yes~ yes! I'm good!”

“I'm okay too.”

“I'm fine too.”

Dird and the others responded to Palty's instructions as if she were a school Sensei. Only Miron,

the real Sensei, was empty-handed. “All I need is this and a bathing suit,” she said, holding up the sunglasses on her head.

Shou, with his luggage on his back, looked up at the camping unit and mumbled. “If you had something this nice, I could have rented this out as a home.”

Palty chuckled at such a complaint. “Sorry Shou, this thing is useless without our power unit, so it's hard to use it as a home on this island on a continuous basis.”

“Oh, I see... ... That's not something Palty should apologize for. I'm just saying. Besides, I'm already used to living in a tent. Don't worry about it.”

“Thank you Shou, I'm looking forward to tomorrow.”

“Yes!”

“Hey, hey! Let's all get some rest early today! We'll leave before dawn tomorrow! Yes! Everyone go to bed: 〜〜〜〜!　Good night, 〜〜〜〜!”

Dird said, Alea chuckled, Apuesta and Palty smiled, and Miron said, “What a kid.

The night passed with everyone thinking about the next day's camp.

Dird and her friends didn't go home that day and rested in their own tents, but Shou couldn't sleep for a while. (Camping. ..... Hehe, I'm looking forward to it...) Just thinking about camping with Dird and the others was so much fun that Shou couldn't sleep for a while after that.

Episode 2: Girls in Paradise

Early the next morning.

Dird was the first to wake up while it was still dark. Shou and the others immediately used the Guardian to discreetly head for the hillside of the island - the mountain where the waterfall flowed. Miron was waiting in the camping unit with Pī and Piyo, and Apuesta and Palty were flying with them.

“Wow... ... I didn't have time to look at the island at all during the battle, but now that I look at it, it's amazing how the Guardians move... ...!” Shou exclaimed with excitement as he looked around the island, and Dird and the others chuckled.

The morning breeze, still dim but pleasant, woke Shou up clearly, and as he filled his lungs with the clear air, he felt as if his whole body was being cleansed. It's a really nice island, Shou thought again.

However, as they approached the mountain and came to a steep cliff, Shou's Guardian suddenly emitted a beeping warning sound and landed on the ground. “What?” Shou was naturally upset.

“Oh, what? What do you mean? Could it be an accident?”

As if chasing after Shou, Dird and the others slowly descended to the ground. However, their guardians don't seem to be deactivated.

“What? Has Shou's Guardian disappeared?”

“Hey, what's wrong, Shou? We're almost to the top, right?”

Dird and Alea made the same questioning faces as Shou, but then Palty noticed and said, “Oh. It's probably because of the 30-meter limit. That's what Dird told the Cabbits yesterday.”

“Oh.”

Everybody else noticed the voice as well. Then, perhaps reacting to the voices outside, Miron peeked out of the window of the camping unit and said, “Hm? What's going on, you guys?”

Ignoring Miron, Alea giggled. “Well, this is good training for Shou, isn't it? Then I'll go on ahead!”

“What? Wait, Alea!” Before Shou could call out to her, Alea flew towards the top with a whoosh.

“Haha, Shou~! If you don't get there in time, Shou will have to skip breakfast!”

“What? I'm going to Dird!” Then Dird flew away, leaving Apuesta and Palty behind. Shou looked at them silently but with anxious eyes...

“... ... Shou, I'm sorry.”

“Hmm. Perhaps the Cabbits have taken this into account. Well then Shou, we're going ahead of you. We'll be waiting for you, okay?”

“What? No, that's not right!”

“Nn? I don't know what it is, but ... ... Good luck, Shou-kun!”

Despite Shou's cries, the two of them also flew to the top of the mountain, carrying the unit containing Miron. However, they left a climbing hat and water for him, which was good. Shou, who was left alone, was astonished for a while and then shouted in desperation.

“Oh, shit! Wait up, guys! ～～～～～～!” Following Dird and the others, Shou desperately climbed up the almost vertical mountainside, looking for a place that still looked relatively gentle.

“Hii, hiiiiii..... hii..... zee, haha.....” After more than an hour, Shou managed to reach the top of the mountain, groggy and exhausted. He wobbled his way to the girls, and when the countdown was over, he fell into the goal.

Shou was drenched in sweat and out of breath, but the girls supported his arms and helped him up. Miron came out of the camping unit, holding the incubator with Pī and Piyo in it, and chuckled, “You're so sloppy.”

“Look! Look, look, Shou, they're just about to come out!”

“Huh...?”

Dird pointed in that direction.

Seeing this, Shou lost his speech.

The next day.

Beyond the sea, the sun began to rise from the horizon, illuminating this world with a radiance more dazzling than that of a jewel. Not only Shou, but also Dird, Alea, Apuesta, Palty, and Miron were all bathed in the light and forgot to speak as they took in the magnificent view.

It was Shou who mumbled first. “..... amazing.”

This place was the highest point on Banjō Island. There were no obstacles in the way, of course, and the view was so beautiful that it seemed to connect the nearby lake with the ocean, almost like a fantasy. He felt as if he was standing in the center of the world. He had seen this kind of scene on TV before, but it was completely different from the excitement of seeing it with the naked eye.

“Ehehe. It's so beautiful, isn't it? I wanted to show you this!”

“Dird... ..., is that why we're here so early in the morning?”

Dird smiled, and Shou appreciated the sentiment and watched the sunrise happen once more. The sun was gradually revealing itself, and as it did, the world became brighter and brighter. Pī and Piyo seemed to be moved as well, and their voices seemed to be higher than usual.

“Hmm, you can't see the sunrise from my tent because the opposite cape is in the way. This is the first time I've seen it, and I'm always impressed by the sight.”

“Besides, ... the air is different here. It's really, really clear.”

“That's right. Honestly, climbing mountains is too much work, but if you consider that it's for the sake of seeing this, you'll be a little more motivated, right?”

“Yeah, yeah! I'm so glad we were able to bring Shou along with us!”

“Yeah, ... thanks, guys.” Impressed, Shou took a deep breath. It wasn't an illusion. Dird and the others were all taking deep breaths as well.

Just then, there was a lovely sound, and everyone turned to look. Behind them, Miron had an awkward look on her face.

“... ... What the hell are you complaining about! You haven't eaten anything since you woke up, so what's the point!” Miron, who was still holding the incubator, blushed a little apologetically, probably because she had indeed ruined an emotional scene.

Everyone laughed, and because of that, Miron turned even redder, and the bright sun was shining like a blessing to Shou.

Shou and the others all started preparing breakfast.

The camping unit, which was supposed to be the size of a bus, was now the size of two large buses and was floating on the lake. It looked like a boat, and Shou thought it looked like a transformed robot.

Before long, Palty called out, “Breakfast is ready!” and everyone gathered on the roof of the camping unit. A folding table and chairs were set up on the roof, where a Western-style breakfast, mainly bread, was laid out on the table. Eating on the lake ... ... was so stylish that Shou couldn't help but exclaim, “Wow. I haven't eaten bread since the mainland. It's been a long time.”

“Hmm. Actually, I was thinking of collaborating with Apuesta to sell various kinds of breads at Tomi's store. I've already told Dird and Alea about it, but I wanted to ask Shou and Miron Sensei for their opinions as well... ...”

Apuesta nodded, and Shou sat down in his chair, replying, “I see.”

Miron noticed something and said, “Hey... But isn't this all bread? Aren't there any other kinds?”

“Oh, it's true ... ...” Shou also noticed when he was told. It was true that the bread was all white bread, but the sandwiches were different.

Palty replied a little apologetically. “Yes. We didn't have enough time to make all kinds of breads, but we're trying to be creative with what we put in them, so we're using all kinds of jams and honey. If Shou or Sensei can think of any ingredients that would be tasty in between, please let us know.”

“Hmm, you're very business-minded. Oh, Apuesta, is this what you were talking about when you were gathering ingredients?”

Apuesta nodded and said, “Yes.” Shou was impressed and took a piece of bread. It had honey in it, and the rich sweetness filled his mouth and relieved his fatigue. The simple taste was really delicious.

Miron was also satisfied with the bread, saying, “Oh, it's pretty good.”

One by one, the girls reached out and took a bite of the bread.

After they had all eaten, and Shou had given Palty his impressions of each piece, Miron gave Pī and Piyo a crumb of bread and said, “By the way, how are you guys planning to spend your time until tomorrow? Dird is going to pick horseradish, right?”

“Yes! But I know where the horseradish is and it won't take too long, so we can just pick some before we leave tomorrow. So, I'll help you guys out today!”

“Oh, then Dird, could you and Apuesta help me gather the ingredients for the bread? If Dird can help me, I'd like to catch and dry some of these fish for the broth that we usually use for our meals.”

“Yeah, okay!”

“Oh, I'll help you with that then.”

“Really? That would be great, Shou.”

Dird circled her fingers in approval. The only one left was Alea, who also agreed to help, saying, “Well, I don't have anything to do, so I'll help, too.

Finally, Dird asked Miron. “So, what are you going to do about Sensei?”

“Me? Huh, I'm going to ... ...! And with that, Miron cut off her words at the point of concern and ran off to her room downstairs.

Miron came back to the puzzled Shou and friends wearing a military uniform, dark sunglasses over her eyes, and a whip in her hand... Shou thought. “Um, ... Sensei? What the hell are you planning to fight ... ...?”

“Don't waste your breath, you scum! Why don't you just get ready while I count to ten!”

“What?” Shou and the others didn't understand what was being shouted at them.

Then Miron threw a large burlap sack in front of Shou and the others and said, “I will now outline the plan! Listen up you scum!”

“... ... uh. In other words, you want to catch a deer and put it in a hamburger... ...” Shou looked at Miron dumbfounded, apparently the bread meal earlier had given her some kind of inspiration and she was selfishly asking for a hamburger made with venison.

Sergeant Miron cracked her whip and said, “There are no animals on this island that prey on deer! That means they can grow in numbers as they please! This is an important operation to protect the island's ecosystem!”

“Or something like that, Miron just wants to eat a deer burger.”

“Shut up, Private Alea! I'll make you a bun-only burger without venison!”

“I'm sorry, sergeant, sir! I'm dying to eat some deer.

“Right! hat's the mission summary! Any questions?”

At Miron's words, Palty raised a fearful hand. “Uh, ..., sir ... Sergeant. Can't we just have a fish burger with fish from the lake?”

“Fish doesn't go well with that bread! I'm tired of eating fish!”

Palty's question was brushed off, followed by Dird raising her hand.

“Yes, yes! But Sensei, didn't Sensei have a lot of beef and stuff?”

“I'm telling you, it's not Sensei, Private Dird!

Dird's eyes glazed over, and finally Apuesta said with a subtle shudder, “Even if you catch it ... ... it takes a few days for the meat to mature ... ... but ... ...”

“We can solve that problem by using various seasonings! Only the remaining meat is usually aged! If you understand, everyone line up on the other side of the river!” Apparently, she wanted to eat a venison hamburger no matter what.

All of them had grown tired of dealing with Miron, gave up their opinions and headed for the mountainous shore of the lake as Miron had ordered.

Shou and the others all deeply agreed with Alea who blurted out, “This is going to be a big hassle.” Pī and Piyo, who were on duty at the time, saw them off with a little squeal.

Then, in front of Shou and the others who were all together on the shore, Miron said with satisfaction. “Okay, we're all here. Now let's make our final preparations before we head out!”

Miron gathered up the mud on the ground and threw it at Shou and the others.

“Whoa! What are you doing, Sensei?

“Wild animals are sensitive! If you walk around smelling like a human like you guys, they'll be wary of you!”

“Whoa! But that doesn't mean you have to throw it at me!

“Hyah!” “Whoa! Agh!”

Dird, Alea, and Apuesta all ran for their lives, but Palty didn't get away fast enough, and Miron's mysterious gaze fell on her...

“That's it!” Miron, flailing like a child, smeared mud all over Palty's face.

At that moment - the air in the place froze cold. From the surrounding bushes and trees, the birds flew away in unison as if they were fleeing.

“.....??”

Shou and Miron were the only two who didn't understand the meaning of this strange phenomenon, but Dird and the others turned pale with fear and started to sprint away from the scene.

Then, suddenly, Palty grabbed Miron.

“What .....?”

The large Miron was slammed headfirst into the swamp by the hands of the lovely Palty. The sight of Miron buried in the ground was truly bizarre.

A moment later, Shou found himself floating in the air as well.

“—Whoa!” Shou let out a short scream and was knocked down into the swamp, but fortunately he fell from his back and was not buried headfirst like Miron.

“Ouch... ... What, what? What the hell? What's happening?”

“Hyah!” “Geez!” “Ugh!”

“Whoa! Hey, guys!

As Shou tried to comprehend the situation, Dird, Alea, Apuesta were caught by Palty and were thrown down in succession, falling near Shou.

“Mmm! Sensei's an idiot!”

“Bwahaha! Of course, it's bad if you do that to Palty, Miron!”

“Ow, that hurts .....” Dird and Alea sat up and yelled, Apuesta was in tears, and Shou was just appalled.

The expressionless Palty slowly approached Shou and the others.

“What?”

The expression on her face was not one of anger. However, her face was filled with a tremendous amount of intimidation that overwhelmed anyone who saw her. Dird, Alea and Apuesta, were trembling silently, as if they knew how terrifying it was. Apparently, they couldn't even speak. The same was true for Shou. The approaching Palty was completely clouded by the sharpness of a large predator. She was like a frog stared at by a snake.

The name eventually came out of the back of Shou's throat as if it was poking at him. “Pal, Tee... ...?”

She mumbled, as if to confirm if she was really Palty or not.

At that moment, the tension that had dominated the place until then disappeared like a lark.

Palty's eyes fluttered, then she looked down at Shou and the others, huffed as if she had finally grasped the situation, and put her hands on both cheeks. “Oh ... ... I'm sorry, I'm sorry! I'm so sorry! I lost my ..... mind and I'm so embarrassed and ashamed!” Palty turned her back to Shou and the others, crouched down, hurriedly scooped mud from the ground to hide her embarrassment, and began to apply it to her cheeks as if she were applying makeup.

Shou and the others finally let out a “huff” as if they were out of it.

Dird shouted with tears in her eyes. “Damn it! It's all Sensei's fault. ～～～～? Palty's really scary!”

“Why did she have to throw us too? Hey Miron, say something.”

“.....Sensei, is buried.”

“Oh.” Apuesta said, and Shou and the others turned their gaze towards her at once.

Miron, who was completely buried in the mud, not only her head but also her upper body, was twitching like a frog half swallowed by a snake.

“Whoa! Sensei――――!!!”

“- ha, ha, ha ... ... I thought I was going to die... ... I saw my great-grandfather, who died when I was seven, waving at me over the bridge... ...”

Miron was covered in mud and breathing heavily, and Alea said in a prickly tone, “You should have just let him take you,” but surprisingly, Miron was not offended.

“I tried to go. But then, just as I was about to run across the bridge, it suddenly broke and I fell

off.”

“Huh?”

“So, I found myself here, covered in mud. Oh no, when my great-grandfather smiles and calls me, it's usually when he's about to pull some kind of prank on me. It's been so long that I'd forgotten.

“.....”

“Hmm? Anyway, is everyone ready to go? Let's go capture some deer!” Miron, who had fainted a moment ago, stood up and walked into the mountains with her whip flicking. Apparently, she was preoccupied with the deer burger.

“Shit, what is her problem?”

“Sensei, you haven't seen Palty angry, have you?”

“Even if I did, I don't think it would change much .....”

“Oh, please don't talk about that again, everyone.”

Shou silently agreed with Apuesta's opinion that it wouldn't change much, and an embarrassed Palty calmed the three of them down. Shou and the others looked at each other as if they had given up and followed Miron.

After that, the group continued to search for deer, with Miron leading the way. After confirming the deer's route by feces and hoofprints, they successfully captured a large doe with Dird playing the role of chaser and Miron playing the role of ambusher. It was an easy job for Dird and the others who could use Guardians.

“Yes, yes! Shou-kun and Palty, you two go back and prepare lunch first! Dird and I will take care of the rest!” Miron told them in front of the deer they had caught, and after Alea complained and glared at them, Shou and Palty agreed and headed back to the lake.

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“I can't believe we actually caught a deer...” Palty said happily as they returned to the lake.
“Hmm, I guess so. I'm going to go wash off the mud first. If you don't mind, Shou, please follow me.”

“Huh?”

After saying that, Palty ran towards the lake, and to his surprise, she jumped straight into the lake. From the crystal-clear water, he could see her swimming gracefully while submerged, and Palty headed towards the camping unit floating in the lake.

“Pa, Palty!” Shou tried to chase after her, but the coldness of the water on his feet made him

shout, “Whoa!” Perhaps it was because the lake was located at a high altitude, but the water temperature was quite low.

“Uh-oh!” Hesitant to jump in, Shou ran towards the pier that connected to the camping unit and chased Palty from there. He was relieved to see Palty emerge safely from the water.

“Hmm. That feels so good.”

To his surprise, Palty suddenly started to take off her wet clothes right there. “What? Palty, Palty... oh!”

The mud on the soles of his shoes caused him to slip, and he stepped off the pier. Naturally, Shou fell headfirst into the lake. The coldness of the water caused his body to shrink all at once.

“It's so cold!”

In front of Shou, who quickly lifted his face out of the water, Palty, who was up on the pier, stretched out her hand in a panic, “Shou!”

“Oh, thank you...” However, remembering that Palty had undressed earlier, Shou hesitated to take her hand. In the meantime, Shou's clothes absorbed the water and became heavier, making it harder for him to move.

“Excuse me!” Seeing Shou's hesitation, Palty forcefully grabbed Shou's collar and pulled him out of the lake, and Shou was careful not to look at Palty as much as possible - that's when he finally realized that Palty was wearing the swimsuit he had given her earlier.

“Are you okay, Shou!”

“Oh, what? You were wearing a bathing suit... ...?”

“Huh? Oh ... ... please don't look so closely at me too much.”

The two of them sat on the pier, both soaking wet, their cheeks flushed.

“Anyway, we'll catch a cold if we stay like this. Let's get dressed right away!” Palty half-heartedly ripped off Shou's clothes, and Shou was appalled for a while, but soon realized the current emergency and shouted.

“What? Whoa! It's okay! I can take it off by myself!”

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Shou was taken into the shower room by Palty, who hurriedly operated the shower and turned on the hot water, but since the shower room was originally designed for one person, the two of them naturally had to put their bodies close together when they entered.

“Oh, you know what, Palty, I'm good for later. I'll wait outside, so you can warm up first...”

Shou was about to leave the shower room when Palty grabbed his hand and wouldn't let go. Shou noticed that her hand was shaking slightly.

“.....Palty? Are you okay? Here, you need to warm up properly!”

Sensing that her body was cold, Shou managed to turn the shower that was hitting his back towards Palty from its cramped position.

“Thank you, Shou... ... I'm not cold, though... ...”

“Huh?”

“I'm sure you've heard this before, but ... ... I'm, well, I'm in a tight spot ... ...”

“—— Ah.” Shou realized after being told. That reminded him of something Alea once said, teasing Palty. She's not very good in small spaces. Perhaps it was claustrophobia, he thought.

“Oh, I'm embarrassed to say this, but I'm a little afraid of these places, too. Toilets are no good unless the door is open, and tents, especially the kind with a roof. If it's not raining, I'd feel safer sleeping outside... ...”

“Yeah, yeah, what ... ... Oh, but I'll be with Dird and the others...”

When staying at Shou's place, Palty often slept in the same tent as Apuesta. Shou wondered about that.

“It's okay to have someone by your side. S-, so ... ...”

“... ... Palty.”

Her trembling hands were like those of a young child.

“... ... Okay, okay. I'll be with you, don't worry.”

“... ... Thank you, Shou.” At that moment, Palty's hands had stopped shaking. Apparently, she had calmed down. “So, so, Shou..... that, I have one more favor to ask.”

“Huh? What, what?”

“Could you please turn around and look at ... ... me?”

“What?” Shou panicked.

“I'm more relaxed when I look at someone's face... ... No, is it... ...?”

“U... ... okay.” (I've come this far; I've got to do it!) With this feeling, Shou took a chance and turned towards Palty. However, as expected, it was too embarrassing to face each other in this closed room, so he just couldn't look straight at her.

“Well, then, why don't you take a shower first Palty?”

“Ha, yes ... ... so after you ... ...”

The only sound in the somewhat awkward air was the sound of the hot water from the shower gently hitting Palty's body. Even though she was wearing a bathing suit, the situation of having a girl taking a shower in front of her - within arm's reach - was something that shook Shou's reasoning violently. Especially if the other person were claustrophobic and had a vulnerable expression on her face, he would be tempted to give her a hug right away.

(Ugh, this is bad!) Considering Palty, Shou can't leave first. He had to wait for Palty to finish taking a shower, but that was a tremendous hardship. Shou had no idea how painful it would be to be in the shower with a girl.

“Shou, you're in here, right?”

“Uh, yeah, I'm here.”

Palty called out to Shou several times in a faint voice. Although their bodies were facing each other, they couldn't help but look away from each other out of shame. That's why Palty kept calling out to him for confirmation.

(Oh my god, what am I supposed to do!) If it had been Dird, he probably would not have been so conscious of it. However, the other person was a neat and beautiful woman with mature charm. She was like a child who was afraid to go to the bathroom at night, and the gap between the two made Shou uncomfortable.

“Sh-, Shou, it's okay if you look at me, okay?”

“Eh, ...”

That's what she said to him.

Shou's gaze ..... slowly made its way to her face.

Palty looked shy and embarrassed, but she seemed relieved and giggled. It appeared that being with him was really helping to calm her down.

(Beautiful, isn't she?) Shou thought as he looked at her face again. And it was not only her appearance that was soaked in hot water, but also the noble scent that oozed from within and the girlish vulnerability hidden behind it, all of which seemed to combine to create her charm. At the same time, it stirred up a tremendous desire for protection.

(Ugh! No, no, no, no! I have to be strong here! Shou shook his head and fought desperately against his various desires.

A few minutes later, when Palty finally left the shower, Shou was so relieved that he collapsed to the floor.

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After taking a shower, they were preparing lunch on the roof of the camping unit. Pī and Piyo were making a lot of noise, as if they were hungry.

Then Miron and the others finally arrived. Apparently, they had finished the dismantling work at the site, and all they had with them were a few large cases.

“I'm so tired! I can't wait to take a bath!” The first one to run was Dird, who left one of the cases with Shou and the others and then jumped straight into the lake.

“I hope this is the last time I'm covered in mud!”

Alea followed Dird into the lake. Finally, Apuesta was sucked into the lake without a word. Shou was impressed that she was able to jump into the lake so cold.

“Well, well, well, kids are so energetic. Palty, make me the most delicious hamburger with this! I've got some herbs and spices from around here, so use them as you see fit! See you later!”

With that, Miron placed the case full of meat on the table and made a spectacular dive into the lake, chasing after Dird and the others.

“Oh, Sensei! That water's so cold... Wow!” Shou tried to stop Miron, but it was already too late.

A large column of water rose up, sending droplets of water flying onto Shou's face. And then...

“Oh my God! What's wrong with this? It's too cold!” Shouting, Miron started to swim up out of the lake in a panic, crawling as fast as she could. When Shou and Palty saw this, they looked at each other and laughed.

Then, until lunch was ready, Miron kept mumbling and complaining about how strange it was that Dird and the others didn't mind the coldness of the lake, and then Palty inadvertently mentioned that she had jumped in too, and that Shou had fallen in.

“Oh, so Shou and Palty both smell like they just took a shower!”

“What do you mean they smell like they've had a shower? Dird's nose is still weird, isn't it?”

“... ... dog-like.”

“Oh, Apuesta, is that a compliment?”

Dird's cheeks puffed out, Alea laughed out loud, and Apuesta also laughed happily, but the last word Alea said changed the atmosphere.

“Hmm? But wait. There's no way that claustrophobic Palty-chan can go into such a small shower room by herself... ... Haha, I see. Is that what you mean?”

“Ugh.”

Alea stared at them with an unpleasant look in her eyes, causing Shou and Palty to squeak. This made Dird, Apuesta and Miron realized what was going on.

“Hey! Palty, you took a shower with Shou? That's not fair!”

“I knew about ... ... Shou, but Palty was naughty too... ...”

“Ha ha? Were you guys messing around without me? You've got some nerve! I'm sure you're not the only one who wants to have fun.

“What? Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa! No, no, no! It's ... ... Pa, Palty, say something!” Shou, who was being cornered, hurriedly called out to Palty, but...

“I'm sorry, ...” Palty just turned red all over her face and apologized.

“Oh, you admit it!”

“Heh, you're doing great Shou, what a way to grow up!”

“You two are nasty .....!”

“Key! You don't respond to my temptations at all, what do you mean Shou-kun?”

“That's not why I'm here!”

All that fuss stopped as soon as the venison burger was finished.

“Well, there's no way a nasty boy like Shou-kun can mess with Palty, right? Yeah. But this is still good! Well done, Palty!”

“Haha, ... more food than sex, huh? It's okay, though, because it saved my life.”

Shou knew that he was just being teased and complained. “Thank you very much, Sensei, and please eat as much as you can.”

“Yes!” Dird replied loudly, and together with Miron, they selflessly proceeded to munch on their burgers. Apparently, they were both very satisfied.

Even Apuesta, who had been glaring at Shou and Palty for a while, was staring at the hamburger, mumbling something to herself as if she had forgotten about the previous incident. She seemed to be thinking about business.

“Haha... ... managed to save the day.”

“I'm sorry, please Shou, have a lot of food.”

“Oh, yeah, thanks Palty.” Shou was released and Palty smiled and brought him a venison burger.

It was really delicious, and Shou thought to himself, “I'm glad I was able to catch a deer despite

all that slapstick.”

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After lunch, the afternoon was all about catching fish, and each used a small net to catch fish. Shou and Miron shared some of the fish as live bait, and the two of them went fishing to catch fish for dinner.

The fishing was great, and for dinner that night they had a gorgeous array of fish dishes.

Shou and his friends, who had been working hard all day, devoured them to replenish their energy for the next day. Miron, who had said she was tired of eating fish, seemed to be satisfied with the venison burger, and ate the fish dishes as if she and Dird were fighting over them.

After that, Miron and the other girls, Pī and Piyo went to sleep on the first floor of the camping unit, while Shou slept in a tent on the second floor.

“Hah~... ... really tired today... ...” On the quiet lake, Shou entered the tent early and lay down.

─ Tippy, tap.

“... ... Hmm?” Shou then noticed the sound of footsteps coming up the stairs and slowly raised himself up.

The footsteps stopped in front of the tent, and then he heard the voice.

“.....Shou, are you still awake?”

“.....Palty?”

A small whisper. But it was definitely Palty's.

“Yes. Um, please listen for a moment. If the Sensei sees us together, she might make a fuss about impure relationships again... ...”

“Ah, yes, that's right. Got it.”

Thus, the two began talking inside and outside the tent.

“Shou. Um ... ..., I'm really sorry for causing you so much trouble today. Especially that time ... ... Shou almost got seriously injured... ...”

“That time... ...? Ah...” She said, and he remembered. The time Miron threw mud at Palty, Shou had been thrown by Palty too, and Palty really looked horrible at that time.

“Oh no, but it was Sensei who was at fault, and besides, I didn't even get a scratch on me. Don't worry about it at all.”

“Thank you, ... but I should have apologized sooner. In fact, I was going to say it in the

shower room, but ... ... even then, well, it was too much for that... ... I'm really sorry... ...”

They both blushed as they remembered the shower room. But at least they couldn't see each other's faces because they were talking through the tent.

“So, but you know, I've heard stories, but I was really surprised to see Palty has a weakness like that.”

“Ugh ... ... I'm so embarrassed ... ...”

“Haha. But Palty seems to be a very perfect girl, so I'm kind of relieved that she has a few flaws ... ... or weaknesses.”

“Is that the kind of thing ... ... you're talking about?”

“Yes. Well, I don't want you to be full of week points like Miron Sensei, though.”

“Huh. Well, Shou, it's a pity for Sensei to say such a thing. She seems to be very concerned and cares about Shou and us.”

“I wonder if that's true. But I think she's too insensitive or too much... ... After all, she made Palty angry again today... ...”

“Oh ... ... no, no. I'm not mad at you.”

“... ...What?” Shou questioned Palty's words, and Palty continued.

“I think it's an over-defensive reaction... ... probably some kind of trauma. If I'm aware of it, I can usually suppress it to a certain extent, but ... ... well, if someone suddenly does something like smear something on my face, my mind instantly goes blank... ...”

Shou was puzzled by her voice, which grew weaker and weaker by the second. Even through the tent, he could tell that she was probably shaking.

“Even back then, if Shou hadn't called my name, ... maybe I would have hurt you just like that. When I think about that, I'm so, so scared... ...”

“Palty... ...”

Palty's intimidation at that time was as if she had faced a lion in the flesh. It was the kind of thing that sent chills down his spine when he recalled it. But Palty was right, if she had attacked there, he would have been more than just hurt. The mute Shou instinctively knew this. And Palty was aware of that as well.

“..... No, there's no point in trying to mend things now; I may have even killed Shou. We're all Bio-Enhanced. Of course, under normal circumstances, I would have been under control, but that time... ...”

“Bio, enhancement?” An unfamiliar term; Shou quickly asked back.

“Yes. It's a technique that strengthens living cells, and although there are different levels, it's a widely used technique in space. Especially since I've undergone a high level of Bio-Enhancement, which is not available to the general public... ... The load is even doubled with a strong one to match. However, if we forget ourselves like I did at that time, ... even a weak force generated by a slight lag could cause fatal damage to Shou. In fact, it can be very hard for Miron Sensei to ... ...”

It was clear that Palty was feeling responsible. He could hear it in her trembling voice. That's why Shou tried to be as easygoing as possible.

“But that was Miron Sensei's fault for stepping on that landmine, so there's no need to worry about it! See, I don't think Sensei cares anymore, either. Besides, Palty's not the kind of person who would do something like that, right? Just think of it as force majeure. Haha, I really don't care about anything either! Palty, shouldn’t worry about it either!”

“.....Shou”

He thought he heard Palty laugh behind the tent.

“Thanks for the ... ... It kind of made me feel better, and I'm glad I got to talk to Shou. Well, I've got an early day tomorrow... ... I'll leave you to it for today. Good night.”

“Yeah, good night.”

Palty's footsteps seemed to be bouncing as she left. But the footsteps suddenly stopped, and a small scream came from Palty, followed by a thud, thud, thud! Then he heard the sound of footsteps coming from downstairs, as if several people were running away. “What?

“Oh my God!” Palty finally shouted in disgust, and then the sound died away.

“Haha, it's Dird and the others.” He immediately guessed. They were probably worried about Palty and came to check on her. It's also possible that they're just curious... ...

“Well, time for bed!” Shou laughed happily and pulled the blanket up, falling asleep immediately afterwards──.

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“Ho~ra~! Shou-kun! Wake up! Shou ku~n!”

“Hm, hm .....”

The next morning, Shou was awakened by Miron's voice, and the sound of the tent being shaken.

“Sensei.....? What are you doing ..... in the morning?”

Shou turned on the lantern inside the tent, while it was probably still dim outside, and jumped in surprise at the shadow of Miron's chest, which was clearly visible through the tent's thin fabric.

Apparently, Miron was shaking the tent from the outside by pressing her upper body against it.

“Wha, wha, what, what are you doing Sensei!”

“What do you mean, I came all the way up here to wake you up because we're going to have breakfast soon. You should be grateful that you were woken up by such a beautiful woman.

“Yes, yes, I understand! I understand, so please don't shake my tent!” But Shou couldn't help but hesitate to go outside. (Ko, this is .....)

Because the line from Miron's chest to her stomach, which appeared close to the tent, did not look like she was wearing any clothes. It was because Shou had once seen Miron in only a thin t-shirt that he understood.

“Hmm? What? What's wrong, Shou-kun? Why don't you come out quickly?”

“I know, I know! So, get out of the way! I can' t get out!”

“Hmm? Why can't you get out? Oh, maybe I woke up something else~?”

“Gosh, this girl is .....!”

Miron pressed her body against the tent, but...

“──Sensei, what are you doing!” The angry shout suddenly heard there was Palty's.

“What? What's going on?”

Perhaps startled by the voice, Miron seemed to have lost her balance and leaned against the tent as hard as she could.

“Whoa! Sensei hey!”

Originally, his one-person tent was not designed to support as much weight as Miron. The resilient frame warped, and though it didn't break, Miron fell on top of Shou through the tent's fabric, crushing him.

(Oh, ..., I knew it. .....!) He was sure that Miron was naked, because he could feel her breasts pressed against his neck, and above all, he could feel her body heat even through the cloth. However, Shou could only feel Miron's touch for a moment...

“Huh? What? .....?”

As soon as the sensation disappeared, Miron's scream ..... quickly faded away, and what ..... was eventually heard was the sound of a huge splash.

Shou stepped out of the tent and saw Palty wiping her hands.

“Good morning, Shou, it's another beautiful morning.”

“Huh? Oh, uh, yeah ..... Good morning ..... is .....”

Palty's smile, appropriate for the brisk morning, was followed by a distant “Aaagh! ada da da cold cold cold cold cold ouch die! Aaaaahhhh!” Miron's voice and the sound of water made it look terrifying... ...

Then Miron came back soaking wet, and said, “By the way, Shou-kun? Did you feel me through the tent? Hmm?” Palty threw her into the lake again, and Dird and the others appeared with appalled faces, and breakfast was finally served. When Miron came back, she seemed to have regretted her decision, and with a pale face and a runny nose, she ate her breakfast in silence.

They all said “thank you” to each other and started the second day. It was free time for everyone.

“Hey, Shou! Today, you're going to pick wasabi with me as promised!”

“Oh, yeah. I know.”

“Ehehe, that's it then!”

Dird couldn't wait to get going, so she pulled Shou along. As he ran after her, his legs tangled. Alea and the others chuckled at the sight.

“Then Alea, Apuesta, let's go, too, shall we?”

“Well, I don't have anything to do either, so I'll help you two.”

“Thank you, Alea.”

The three of them continued their work from the previous day, gathering ingredients for the bread to be sold. Yesterday, they had found a few places where berries and such were growing.

“Um, what are you going to do Sensei?” Palty asked Miron, who was lying on a beach chair after a long day of eating.

“Hmm. I'm going to go fishing and relax with the chicks. I'm tired from all the strenuous exercise you put me through this morning, blech.

“Oh, I see... ... We'll be back around three o'clock, so please eat lunch with Shou and Dird, who will probably be back first.”

“Will do.”

The three of them disappeared into the nearby forest after being seen off by Miron, who fluttered her hands lazily.

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Shou, on the other hand, was being led by Dird as they moved through the mountains. The sight of the morning sun shining through the trees was somehow mysterious, and just being in this

forest seemed to heal him. Perhaps it was the negative ions that were being generated.

“Anyway, what was with Miron Sensei this morning? She's always been weird, but today she was even weirder, or rather, ... seemed more out of context than usual.”

“Haha. In fact, last night, Palty and I had a great time talking about Shou, but even after ..... we were about to go to bed, Sensei kept drinking and pestering me! She kept asking me what I thought of Shou-kun and whether I really had anything to do with him. It was really annoying! So, we rolled her up and threw her out because she was so loud.”

“What? She really gave you that much trouble? I wonder if that woman is really aware of what it means to be a leading teacher... ... No, she doesn't seem to be aware of what it means to be an adult in the first place.”

“Ehehe. Maybe she's jealous~?” Dird blurted out, her words only slightly reaching Shou's ears.

“Huh? Dird, did you just say something?”

“Hmm, it's nothing... Oh, more importantly, Shou, we're almost there~!”

“Wow, wait, Dird!”

Dird squeezed Shou's hand again and sped up her pace.

At that moment, Shou noticed that a fog-like substance was beginning to form around them.

“Oh, no, I can't. I'm in a bit of a hurry, Shou~!”

“Uh-huh?”

Shou ran off with Dird pulling him along. They carefully crossed a log bridge and slipped under a big tree on the other side of the river. At the same time, it started to rain hard, even though the sky was clear.

“Wow, it's really raining!

“I knew it was gonna rain, Shou, should I use this?” Dird took out a thin film-like sheet from her backpack. She stood next to Shou and draped it over their heads. This blocked the chilly wind and made the sheet slightly warmer inside. Moreover, the sound of the rain hitting the sheet was almost inaudible, and apparently it also absorbed the moisture, making the space quite comfortable.

“We're almost there, but let's take a break from the rain. It's just a passing rain, so I'm sure it'll stop soon.”

“Uh-huh. But this is amazing, isn't it? Is this something from space too?” Shou asked as he leaned closer to Dird.

“Yes,” Dird replied with a nod, “but you know, it's not really meant to be used like this.”

“What? Is that so?”

“Yes. Well, I don't know much about it, but it's supposed to be used in combination with various other materials. I think it's used to make the walls of those camping units. Apuesta told me about it once!”

“Wow. I wonder if that's a material that doesn't exist on Earth?”

“Ummm, no. Most of the things that we take for granted in our daily lives are made from materials that are found in the earth as much as possible. This seems to be one of them.”

“I see. I guess people in space have a lot of difficulties too.”

“That's right. We're going through a lot too!”

They both started laughing and realized that the rain had stopped.

“Oh, it looks like it's stopped already! Let's go, Shou!”

“Yes!

After a few minutes of walking fast, they found an open area with a small waterfall falling down in steps through the bushes.

“We're here~! This is it, Shou!”

“Wow ... ... there's a small waterfall like this, it's amazing ... ... Oh, wasabi!” Shou found what he was looking for and pointed to it. He had seen it before on the mainland, so he immediately recognized it.

“Wow, I heard that they grow wild, so I thought they would just grow on the slopes of the mountains, but they're pretty neat.”

“You know, this is a tributary of the mountain stream we just passed. Apuesta said this used to be the mainstream, but the current has changed, so we've been weeding and repairing it with some rocks!”

“I see. That's why it's like a little field.”

“Yes! Then let's start picking wasabi!”

“Okay!”

Shou and Dird started to collect wasabi together.

It is said that the growth of wasabi varies greatly depending on the water environment, but the wasabi here all had such strong roots that it was difficult to pull them out with both hands. According to Dird, the wasabi that she brought back home must be carefully plucked and washed with water to reveal the wasabi that Shou knew.

As they continued to pick the wasabi a casual conversation took place.

“It rains a lot on Earth, doesn't it? I was really surprised when I first came to Earth.”

“What? What do you mean?”

“Well, where I was born, it never rained. So, when I experienced rain for the first time on Earth, I was so surprised! I was even scared at first!”

“Wow, ... you're afraid of rain, it must be totally different from space.”

“No, it's not. I've never been to a planet where it rains, or a large space station where the weather can be adjusted...”

Then Dird suddenly lowered her voice, and Shou felt a little uncomfortable with her, and stopped picking wasabi. He wondered if this was the difference between space and Earth, or something like that.

Then he tried to change the subject a little to cheer her up.

“— Ah. So, but, if it's your first time to go down to a planet, aren't there a lot of other unusual things to see?”

Shou's simple question was answered by Dird's cheerful “Yes!” She nodded cheerfully.

“Well, I've seen a lot of videos and stuff, but everything is so unusual, and I really enjoy it!”

“Haha, I see.” Shou felt as if he was saved by Dird's smile as she spread her hands.

“Also, I realized that we could live happily without more food than we need, and that's what impressed me the most!”

“What? More than necessary... ...?”

“Well, of course it's partly because of the environment on this island, but it's fun to know that as long as you have what you need for the day, you can get by on that. In space, you have to have enough air, water, food, and everything else in reserve to feel safe. So, you end up hurting someone, or taking from someone else. .....”

“.....Dird”

Her face, which had been so happy, began to darken slightly.

To Shou's concern, Dird chuckled and said, “Ehehe. I'll tell you about it. I don't want to tell you any more than I have to, because it would make me feel uncomfortable.”

Dird then looked up as if she had made up her mind. Shou also made up his mind to listen to her seriously.

“You see, the reason I've never been to a planet, or a large station is because our family has always lived off the beaten path. We've moved around a lot, too.”

“..... Is that because you're a pirate?”

“Ummm, no... ... I'm, you know, I've been running from my pirate friends, too.”

“What .....? But why?”

“It's because of a man from ..... our clan. He was so evil that even our guild mates hated him, and the GP ordered us to shoot him dead as soon as we found him. His ship was also ordered to be sunk as soon as it was found.”

Shou gulped. For a moment, he imagined a man with a skull cap and an eye patch like in the movies, but he was probably not that kind of person.

But then Shou thought of a question. “Ah, but aren't ..... pirates, you know, the kind of people who ..... exist? Oh, that's just my own imagination! I'm sorry if I'm wrong!”

“Yeah, you're right. But you know, “pirate” is just a term used by the Galactic Federation. We don't have any concept of what it means to be a pirate because that's how we live our lives.”

“I see. That's right.”

“Yeah. So, about that clan guy, ... he attacked ships and killed people just for fun, just for his own pleasure. I can't imagine what happened to the people he captured, and I don't want to. I can't even imagine how many people, friend or foe, were killed by him... ...”

“Da, Dird?”

Dird suddenly dropped to her knees. Shou walked over to her and crouched down as well, gently touching her shoulder.

“Dird, are you okay?”

“Uh, yeah ... ... I'm sorry. I just remembered what happened when they showed me the images of the victims... ...”

Dird's body began to shake as she forced herself to laugh. Her face was pale and quickly became pained.

“He did all the ... ... work, but this is as good as done by you guys. ..... I ..... I ..... I .....”

“Dird, that's enough. Don't force yourself to talk.” Shou pulled Dird's trembling shoulders into a hug. Perhaps because of this, Dird's trembling gradually subsided.

“..... Yeah, thanks Shou, but I'm fine. It's not like I'm clean and sober. There are many people in the universe who do terrible things. I've even helped some of them. There are many places where people can't make a living without it. I'm the same as .....”

“Dird.....”

“Shou is ..... hate me like that? Do you despise me?”

He let go of her body.

Dird kept her head down and wouldn't look at Shou's face.

Shou was troubled, and then answered apologetically. “..... I'm sorry, I still don't know much about space or pirates, and I don't understand a lot of the fighting on this island. But I've already gotten to know Dird and the others and become friends with them ....., so I can't despise them. But I can't say anything else either. I'm sorry, it might be a little cruel to Dird and the others, but ..... I can't say anything to them right now.....”

“..... Yes, you're right. ─ Yes, but I think you're right!” Dird was a little sad at first, but soon she returned to her normal Dird self, in good spirits.

Shou, of course, really wanted to comfort Dird. But he couldn't say anything selfish because he thought that it was the worst thing to say irresponsibly. Just sympathy is not good for the other person in the end. However, he decided to say what he had.

“But I don't think there's any reason for Dird and the others to be blamed for what “he” did. So, I don't think we should worry too much about it.”

“.....!”

The words must have come as a surprise to Dird. She stared at Shou with wide eyes, startled out of her voice.

“I don't know much about space ....., but if you think you've done something wrong Dird, why don't you do your best so that you don't have to do that from now on? Besides, I'll help you out, too!”

“.....Shou. Yeah, thanks ....., I know!” Dird's voice sounded like it was about to tear up.

Shou kept smiling at Dird. So, she gradually regained her usual smile.

“So, the guy was the reason that Dird's clan was hiding out?”

“Yeah. There were a lot of people looking for that guy's stronghold. .....”

“But if you're here now, does that mean that ..... guy was caught?”

“Yeah. He was a guy who thought of everyone else as a toy, but there was only one guy he really hated and one girl he really liked. And you know what? He went to interrupt their wedding! And he got caught in the act!”

“Wow, that sounds like something out of a movie.”

“Haha, but it's not that cool, you know? You sneak into a wedding, try to kill the guy, and get beaten back in a bad way at .....! Hahaha, and that guy is actually an Earthling like Shou, you know?”

“What? Is that so?”

“Yes, he's a hero who destroyed the pirates. But to us, he's more like a demon or a plague god. Haha.”

“The hero who destroyed the pirates .....” At Dird's words, Shou guessed that she was talking about Minamida. However, Minamida wanted to hide his true identity from the girls. So he wasn't going to say anything. But he couldn't help but be curious, so Shou asked. “You know, Dird, do you still have a grudge against ..... that person?”

“What? Hmm, I don't have a grudge against Minamida-san...” Dird's lips were involuntarily pressed, and she looked like she was in trouble.

“What? Dah, Dird? What? You knew?”

“Ugh ....., I've been exposed .....” Dird's shoulders slumped as she took her hand away from her mouth. Then, perhaps having given up, Dird began to speak in a whisper.

“It was Palty who first noticed it”, she said. “But most of us know about it now. But don't tell Minamida-san... ... See, Minamida-san, he's trying really hard to hide it, isn't he? Shou knew that, didn't he?”

“Uh, yeah..... So, what do you think about ..... now?”

“I don't hold a grudge, you know. I don't really hold a grudge, because in the end, it was like he freed our family from him, and thanks to him, we're able to live happily like this now, and I got to meet Shou! I'm sure there are some people who resent him, but maybe not that many. If you can afford to hold a grudge, you need to work on improving your life!”

“Ha, you're all pretty dry, aren't you?”

“Yeah. Besides, it's not Minamida-san's fault, he's a person with a very skewed probability.”

“What? Probability bias?” He didn't know what that meant. When He asked, Dird replied with a laugh.

“Minamida-san, it seems that every time he went into space, he ran into pirates, and while he was trying to deal with them, he ended up destroying them.”

“Oh, well, he did say that he just created the opportunity ..... But I don't know how Minamida-san managed to stay safe after getting into such trouble every time he went into space.”

“Haha, it seems that the GP and the Academy gave Minamida-san a lot of special personnel and equipment. They probably used him to their advantage, I'm sure.”

“I see... ..... It's like some kind of hoi polloi... Minamida-san must have had a hard time. .....” Shou looked up at the sky, thinking about this in a sad way.

“And besides, Minamida-san rarely attacked us aggressively in the end. Most of the time, it was a pattern of pirates attacking their prey and getting hit back, and it's our fault for getting caught by the bait and getting hit. So, it's not right to hold a grudge. Of course, he was a nuisance to us, though...”

“I see. So, he really was just a trigger. ..... But you know, it's an amazing influence to destroy pirates by involving them in your bad luck. That's outrageous.”

“Yeah. Palty told me once that people like that usually can't grow up properly and end up having mental breakdowns. But Minamida-san is not like that... ... He's very serious and good-natured. He looks a little stiff, but he's kind and ... ... I'm sure he's a good person. It's a miracle that he could grow up like that.”

“Miracle, huh?” Indeed, Shou thought. If he were in Minamida's position, he wouldn't have any confidence that he could survive being attacked by so many pirates.

“I'm sure he has a strong heart. That's why everyone who knows Minamida-san seems to think he can't be beaten.”

“I guess that's true too. And besides, if you saw Minamida-san being chased by Miron Sensei every day, you'd think that he's a very unlucky person indeed.”

“Hahaha! That's right. But you see, isn't Shou also here because of Minamida-san's bad luck? Maybe that's why Shou has been favored by Miron Sensei?”

“Ugh, yeah, I guess so ... ... But even if that's the case, I don't think I'd hold a grudge against Minamida-san either. In this case, it's Miron Sensei that's the problem, not Minamida-san. Isn't the devil or pestilence really Miron Sensei?”

“Hahahaha! Shou, I feel sorry for you if you say it like that~!”

“Haha, that's true too, it would be terrible if Sensei heard us.”

“Hmph. It's okay. I'm like a demon or a pestilence god anyway!”

“Aaaaahhhh!”

“What? Sensei?”

At that moment, Shou and Dird were startled by a voice coming from the bushes behind them and jumped. Miron appeared through the bushes, soaking wet, with a grimace in her eyes. She had probably been hit by the rain earlier.

“Se, Sensei! What are you doing here?

“Hmm! I wanted to eat venison steak with horseradish butter and sauces! I also have a problem

with leaving you two alone together! So I came along and got caught in the rain and now this! And what's more, the two of you are hunched over each other, making out with each other, using ..... me as a story, you've got some nerve, don't you?"

"Huh? It's not like that."

"I don't care what you say! I want to be a part of this!"

"What? What?"

Miron opened her arms and suddenly stepped in between Shou and Dird, grabbing them and hugging them. Both Shou and Dird's clothes were soaked from being held by the wet Miron.

"Oh, it's cold, cold. Here, warmer one, warmer two! Come closer! Rub my hands! Rub my feet too! You can rub my feet, too!"

"Oh no! Sensei, my clothes are soaking wet, and I feel sick!"

"Hmm? Oh, yeah, you'd better take them off." Miron said flatly, and suddenly started to take off her clothes.

"Whoa!"

"Wait! Wait up, Warmer One! Don't you dare run away!"

"Geez!" Shou tried to escape, but Miron pulled him back with tremendous force.

"Oh, I'm going to catch a cold if I keep this up. The pants are fine, but let's take off the ..... bra." Miron continued, casually removing her t-shirt and then her bra as well. Underneath, she was down to just a pair of panties, and she couldn't look directly at him.

"Boo! Sensei! Please don't do this to me!

"I'm fine. I'm not going to be completely naked like this morning."

Shou was dismayed to see that ..... was still like that.

They headed for a stump with mossy roots under Miron's direction. Miron, who was barefoot for some reason, sat down on the stump and wiped the moisture off her body with Shou's clothes.

"Wait, please don't wipe yourself with people's clothes!"

"Pfft! What, Shou-kun, is that a pun?"

"No, it's not! It's just cold!"

"Huh. That reaction is so cute. ..... Mwah!"

Miron placed her cold hand right on Shou's neck, causing his body to shrink as he desperately

tried to get rid of the hand, but it was quickly replaced by the other one.

“Sensei, are your hands cold? I'll warm them up for you!”

“Oh, you're so sweet, Dird. You're so different from some of the DTs!”

“Stick with .....”

Miron's body was wet and shiny, and she was a beautiful woman with a great figure, which made him angry. But a frustrated Shou at least tried to fight back.

“At least if Sensei had been wearing clothes, I could have rubbed her!”

“Oh? So you preferred it on top of my clothes, huh? Hurry up and tell me, you maniac boy! Then I'll just put on my pants, so hurry up...”

“Where are you trying to touch me? You're not allowed to talk about the bottom line. What the hell are you doing here in the light of day?

“Damn it! We're in the middle of a deserted mountain with a nice girl naked in front of us. ..... What a coward DT is. I'm sure you're not the only one.

“I'm definitely the weakest as a guy in this power struggle... ...”

“I wonder if that's true?”

Dird nodded her head, but she was an alien with Bio-Enhancement, and Miron, though an Earthling, was a large woman with military experience, so there was no way Shou could win.

“Well, power doesn't simply mean arm strength, either.” Miron mumbled as she reached for Dird's chest.

“Kyaa? Sensei, what are you doing?

“Because your cleavage looks so warm. Let me put my hands between them!”

“No, no! No! Why don't you just do it yourself?

“What's so funny about putting it in yourself? Besides, you're going to get cold again after you've started to warm up. I'll write something good about you on my report card!”

“Well, this girl sucks. .....”

Dird laughed and said, “That tickles! No!” Shou's cheeks reddened at the sound of Dird's coquettish voice, but he turned away so as not to see it.

“Dird and I are here to pick wasabi, so please don't interrupt us anymore! Don't you want to put wasabi butter on your steak?”

“Hm? I guess you could say that. But I want to soak in the warmth of Dird's chest like this for a while longer. Or do you think Shou-kun will warm them up for me?”

“Don't be too cocky, I'll tell Palty when we get home.”

“Well! Why don't you two go pick up some wasabi! The sun is coming out, and I'm going to stay here and dry my clothes and warm myself in the sun!” Miron, who had apparently been mildly traumatized by Palty, immediately pulled away from them with a pale face and suddenly showed a more understanding attitude.

“Haha ... ... Okay, so let's continue with the wasabi picking, Dird.”

“Haha. Yeah, I guess so!”

And so Shou and Dird set about picking wasabi again, while Miron lazily soaked up the sun on a large leaf.

Following Dird's lead, Shou collected about a dozen stalks of wasabi and then spent an hour or so helping with the simple maintenance of the wasabi fields for the next time they came.

After finishing their work, they wiped off their sweat and returned to Miron's place...

“What? Sensei, you're sleeping.”

“I guess she has no idea she's a ... ... teacher.”

Miron was lounging on a leaf, still wearing only her panties.

Dird poked her cheek and said, “Sensei?” but Miron continued to sleep with a pleasant look on her face.

“So ... ... what do we do now? As I recall, it's quite a ways to where we're camping, right?”

“Hmm, I think it's twice as far as the distance from Shou's house to the school, isn't it?” Dird replied flatly.

Shou had a bad feeling about this but was desperately trying to think.

“—— Ah. But, but! Dird is Bio-Enhanced, I believe, right?”

“Palty told you? Oh, I am. But my powers are normally reserved, so I can only give you

instantaneous power, okay? What's wrong with that~?”

“No, ... it's nothing, sorry. Huh, I knew I'd have to carry Sensei... Ah!”

Then Shou had a flash of inspiration. “That's right! We can carry her in the Guardian! It'll be easier, and Sensei won't be sexually harassed in any weird way! Yeah, that's right!” Shou's eyes lit up at the strange idea, but...

“Hmm. But I wonder if Sensei is treated as a Guardian field resistant?”

“Eh? Field resistance treatment?”

Dird nodded and replied, “Yes. You know, Shou, the Guardian is a high-energy force field body, so if a person touches it, it will cause a slight burn.”

“What? Is that so?”

“Yes. I hope this film is made of heat-resistant material.” Dird said and took out the film sheet that she had used to shelter them from the rain earlier. She then made her own guardian appear and tried to touch the film with the guardian.

Shou shouted in surprise, “Wow.”

“I'm sorry Shou, this was originally meant to be used with various films layered on top of each other, so it looks like it's impossible to use this by itself.”

“Damn it, I'll wake her up no matter what!”

“Haha. But if Sensei was the kind of person who would wake up immediately, I don't think Minamida-san would have had such a hard time.”

“.....” Shou looked at Miron, feeling despair at Dird's laughing words. Then he shrugged his shoulders.

“Oh ..... I'm going to have to carry you after all ..... Well, I can't just leave you here like this, so it's no use, but ..... even if you do, I don't want you in just your panties. .....”

“Oh, I'll put a shirt on Sensei for you then.”

“Thanks, Dird.....”

With that, and Miron's shirt on, Shou carried Miron on his back with a sigh, while Dird packed up the rest of their stuff into a backpack and carried the clothes and shoes they couldn't fit in.

“Alright! Then let's go home~!”

Nodding at Dird's words, Shou lazily walked towards the campsite.

The thought of carrying such a heavy load up there made him cringe, but being on top of a .....

mountain, he was fortunate that the temperature was cool.

With a few breaks along the way, Shou and Dird (plus a heavy load) were able to make it back to camp safely in about an hour. However, it was difficult for them to cross the unstable bridge with the large Miron in his arms. So Shou managed to settle Miron down on the summer bed that Dird had brought for her, covering her with a thin blanket.

“Good work, Shou!”

“Huh~. I'm really tired... ... My legs are already wobbling... ... Sensei, you're like a little kid, falling asleep in the middle of the road and needing to be collected.”

“Haha. It's not like she's a little kid. Let's have lunch soon!”

“Oh, yeah, I guess so. Well, Sensei said she wanted to eat venison with wasabi butter... ... Let's make sandwiches then. It doesn't matter if it's cold, right?”

“Ah, Sensei~!”

Dird responded energetically, and Shou immediately started to get ready.

He sliced the roasted venison that had been saved into thin slices and put some finely chopped wasabi leaves between the slices, as Dird had suggested. They didn't have butter, as expected, but they put it in the bread that Palty had brought, and it was done.

“Okay, it's done!”

“Yes! It looks delicious, Shou~!”

“Yes, it does. Now I'll make some coffee.”

Shou, who was in a better mood, was making coffee for himself and Dird when a heavy voice came from behind them.

“Oh, that smells so good... ... Are you two having dinner alone?”

“What? What? Both Shou and Dird were startled by Miron's appearance, who appeared as if she were a bear.

“Hey, what's up Sensei? You're finally awake, aren't you? Geez, I had to carry you on my back again, didn’t I? Please stop falling asleep so quickly here and there! And please get your ass in some decent clothes!”

“Yes, yes, I'm sorry. But Shou-kun, while saying that, you are happy to burn your eyes with my undressed figure and touch my body here and there, aren't you? I'm sure you'll be happy to hear that.

“Gosh... ..., why am I being treated like a tsundere ... ...!”

“There's plenty for you too, Sensei! Come on, let's eat!” With Dird's voice, lunch finally began.

“Oh ～～～～ Happiness～～～～! Thanks for the food ～～～～!” Dird stretched with a truly happy expression on her face.

“I'm definitely full, but ..... I don't feel like I've eaten much.” While saying this, Shou glared at Miron, who was smiling and sipping her after-lunch coffee.

“Why didn't you just eat slowly?”

“I couldn't take my time next to Sensei, who was growling and eyeing Dird's sandwich like a large carnivore!”

“Oh, that's my fault? What? If you feed me and make me miss you, I might be able to do something for you.

“You're already living next to my house, ...”

“There's a big difference between living there and being familiar with you, Shou-kun.”

“I'm already familiar with you, and I don't need you to be any more familiar with me! Please go take a shower and change your clothes as soon as possible. After a rest, I want to catch some fish for dinner before Palty and the others come back.”

“Hmm, Shou-kun, you seem to like the fish here a lot, don't you? It tastes a lot like salmon, which I'm familiar with.”

“Oh, that's right. Salmon is a breakfast staple for the Japanese.”

“All right. I'll help you with it later as a thank you for carrying me. I'm going to take a shower now.” Miron waved and went down to the first floor. Shou and Dird quickly cleaned up the mess.

About thirty minutes later.

Using some of the small fish that Palty and her friends had caught the day before and left for live bait, Shou, Dird, and Miron started fishing at a leisurely pace. They were able to catch about ten fish by the time the girls returned.

They seemed to have had a great harvest, and they came back with three large cases in their Guardian.

This was the end of the camping trip. After that, everyone was busy preparing to go home.

It took nearly three hours to organize and take in all the things they had collected, transform the camping units, and clean up the area around the lake where they had stayed.

Finally, they were ready and Shou and the others left the lake, each with their own luggage.

“Hey, did you guys forget anything?”

“No problem.” “It's fine!” “No problem.” No problem.” “No problem.” “No problem.” Everyone replied to Miron's voice as they finished their checks.

“Then let's get the hell out of here! Come on, you guys! Activate your Guardians!”

As Miron said this, Alea let out a short “ah”.

“You know, I was just thinking, Shou's Guardian can't be activated unless it's under the cliff, right?”

“Ah...”

Alea's casual remark caused everyone to raise their voices.

“..... Ahhhh! That's right, that's what I thought!

“..... Well, we're going home first. Come on, you guys, get me out of here!”

With Shou's head in his hands, Miron quickly got inside the unit with the incubator containing Pī and Piyo.

“Ohhhh wait! At least give me a ride down to the bottom too ～～～～!”

“Shou-kun ....., this is also training. It's not like I'm doing this because I want to, but I have to keep my mind off of it for Shou kun's sake. ..... You know what I mean, right?”

“No, I don't know Sensei.....! I'm the one who brought the sleepy Sensei back to the campground today! Are you going to return the favor?

“Shou-kun, if you're Japanese, you know this word, don't you?” That's the one, this is the one.

Come on, you guys! Don't spoil Shou-kun! Let's go! Let's go! Let's get the hell out of here!” Miron quickly closed the door and left Shou outside.

Dird, Apuesta, and Palty stared at Shou and Miron alternately with puzzled faces; only Alea seems unconcerned, but all four of them finally looked at Shou and said;

“Uu~. I can't help it; it's for Shou's own good, right?”

“Shou, keep up the good work. It's a field trip until you get home.”

“Sorry, Shou..... Be careful.”

“Excuse me Shou, I'd love to lend a hand, but ..... please be careful.”

“Huh? Huh? Huh? Huh? Wait, wait, wait, wait!”

One by one, the girls patted Shou on the shoulder encouragingly, activated their Guardians, and flew away with the unit containing Miron.

“Eeee!!! Guys aaaaahhh!” Shou's cries were futile, and the girls gradually became smaller and smaller until ..... they could no longer be seen or heard. Shou, now alone, dropped to his knees and nodded. “Damn ..... this at the last minute .....”

But this was no time for whining. Night would soon fall if he didn't start moving. If it did, it was hopeless; Shou would have to get up. “All right, I'll do it! I'll do it!” He made up his mind and started to descend the mountain with his luggage.

However, as expected, it was not an easy task. In fact, descending a mountain is much harder on the legs than climbing it, and the fatigue level is higher. This made it possible to go faster, but it was very difficult to descend while being careful not to slip and fall. In the first place, this mountain was not even well paved, so the path was even steeper.

“Hah, hah, hah ..... And, but I did it .....” Falling down a few times, Shou reached the bottom of the cliff just as the mountain began to get dark in earnest. Then he looked at the sky, which was almost enveloped in darkness, and said, “That's dangerous. ..... If it had taken as long as it did to get here, we'd be in trouble.” Muttering, Shou wiped the sweat off his face and immediately activated his Guardian and flew straight to his familiar home (but a tent).

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“Huh, I'm finally here... ...” Shou returned to the tent near the beach in the dim light, and thanks to the lights that the girls had lit as landmarks, he was able to return without getting lost.

After disarming the Guardian, Dird and the others came running up to Shou.

“Ah, Shou~! You're finally back~!”

“You're late Shou, what have you been up to?”

“Shou, are you okay? Are you hurt?”

“Shou, are you okay? I was so worried when you came so late... ...”

“Everything is fine ... ..., I just scraped my leg a little. I'm sorry for worrying you.” Shou smiled wryly, and the girls all looked relieved. “But you know, I did that in a pretty big hurry. I was able to get down that cliff in about half the time it took me to get there, and I worked pretty hard. Ah, I'm tired.” As Shou talked about his saga, the girls looked at him with puzzled expressions.

Then Alea, who was trying to hold back a giggle, said, “What, that's what you meant after all? Well, that's really good work, Shou.”

“What? A, Alea? I knew it?”

“No, you can use the Guardian at the bottom of the cliff, right? If that's the case, you could have

just picked the right spot and jumped off the top in a flash."

"..... huh? Ahhh, no way!"

"No, but Shou is a very honest person, so I knew you would come down in earnest. I was right, wasn't I, guys?"

"Shou, you came down just like normal. But you did great! Good job!"

"Shou..... don't worry about it....."

"Oh, sure, that would have been quick. ..... Oh ..... What the hell is my problem .....?" Shou collapsed in a heap, and Palty gently placed a hand on his shoulder.

"Shou, I'm glad you're okay. Besides, it's good to think of this as training for a fight, isn't it?"

"Palty....." Smiling, she was still kind, and Shou felt his heart melt.

"Hmm. We'll be ready for dinner soon, so please go wash your hands first. We'll take care of the preparations for you."

"Uh-huh. Thank you." After changing in his tent, Shou washed his face and hands in the spring, wiped his face with a T-shirt wildly, and returned to Dird and the others as if he was caught by the good smell.

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A few days later; Shou was at the base as usual, training with the Cabbits.

"Yes! So much for today's simulation training, shall we?"

"Ha, yes ....."

With a single word from M, today's training was over; Shou slumped down on the spot and wiped off the sweat with a towel.

"Good work~ Shou onii-chan!"

"I feel a little better."

"Shou-san, you're moving much better. I think you'll be okay for the next fight now."

"Hahaha ..... ah, thank you." Despite the praise, Shou still wasn't satisfied. Even if things went well in the simulation, he didn't know if they would go well in reality. In the first place, Shou himself did not feel that his movements had improved.

"Um, can I ask you one more time?" Shou said.

The Cabbits must have seen the look in Shou's eyes and understood his intentions. But M, on

behalf of the others, replied. “Shou-kun. Then let's go outside today and actually use the Guardian, shall we?”

“—— Eh?”

At M's suggestion, Shou was now flying in the skies of the island.

“What do you think, Shou-kun? Is it still different from flying in a simulation?”

“Ah, yes. I think it feels different when it's real.”

“I guess so. Let's incorporate this kind of training in the future.”

It was a training session, but Shou just flew around the island leisurely, M said that using the Guardian while experiencing the real world in this way would give him a better sense of unity and be good training.

“..... It's a beautiful island, isn't it?” It wasn’t a big island, but the beauty of it was still stunning.

“It's nice, Shou Onii-chan. It looks so comfortable~!”

“..... so?”

“It's good to have a leisurely training like that once in a while♪”

Shou continued to fly while listening to the voices of the Cabbits on the communicator. It's a great way to get to know the people you're working with. As it was, Shou was flying low and checking the Guardian's behavior, when he spotted something that made him raise an eyebrow.

“..... Hmm? What's that?” He continued his slow descent. It was the sea near the beach where he lived. There was a stone pillar sticking out of the sea. It was something he should have been used to seeing, but that time it was a little different.

A part of the stone pillar had been ..... peeled off. And it looked to Shou as if a metallic light was peeking out of it.

“? What is it?” Curious about that, Shou tried to get even closer to the stone pillar with the Guardian, but...

“...Shou-kun. Let's end today's training here. I want to adjust the Guardian one last time, so can you come back?”

“Eh, ah, yes. I understand.” While taking one last look at the stone pillar, Shou went straight back to the base.

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Now that he had the Guardian System, Shou's life had changed a bit.

First was training. Although he still couldn't get used to the act of fighting, his mind and body gradually began to understand how to move the Guardian, and on the day of the weekly battle, he was able to deal with Dird and the others well - although he was only able to stop them with sound weapons.

Also, the range of activities on the island had exploded. The Cabbits cautioned him against using the Guardian on a daily basis, but the island was beautiful, and the life in this tropical resort enriched Shou's heart, even if there was a battle ahead.

Shou had come to enjoy these days from the bottom of his heart.

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─ It was exactly one month later.

“..... Yes. Yes, sir. I'll tell him that. Yes, sir. Now if you'll excuse me.”

In a dark room, Minamida was communicating with someone. As soon as he finished his communication, the secret wall covering the space was lifted and the room became brighter. It was Minamida's living room.

“Oh dear, ..., what's going on?” With a sigh, Minamida leaned against the back of his chair. The small terminal display in his hand showed a record of Shou's battles so far.

“Well, it ended up being a stalemate, just like he wanted.” Cabbit──M, who was standing beside him, chuckled.

Following that, F, K, and D began to speak. “The only time there was a proper battle was the first time Shou-onii-chan participated, and the rest of the time, Shou-onii-chan forcibly stopped the battle with wide-area sound.

“In addition, the more he trains, the more accurate his attacks become. ..... You're a terrible person, Shou-san.”

“But it's also because of the special environment .....”

“You say that, but D, isn't Shou-kun's ability to always achieve the maximum results in that environment real?”

“It's .....” At M's statement, D searched for a few words, then nodded.

As the Cabbits spoke, Minamida also spoke up.

“Characteristic affinity value or ..... no, I didn't think he had this kind of talent.”

“It's true. It reminds me of when you first came up in space.” M said happily, causing Minamida to giggle.

“Haha. But I was so desperate back then that I didn't even realize I had a talent.”

“But ..... I guess we'll never know what's going to happen in the future.”

“.....I think it's going to be pretty tough.”

“.....Yes, K and D.”

K and D - M is mysteriously convinced by the two animals' words, then F says.

“Uu~. But it's a pity that Shou Onii-chan is training so hard and getting results like this... ...”

“It is no wonder that the results are not pleasing to them, F.” M told her consolingly; F's ears drooped wistfully.

“Yeah, but it's definitely inevitable... ... I understand how you feel, Kukoma-kun, but this fight is something that has to be settled at some point... ... “Minamida said, and the Cabbits nodded to each other.

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“What ..... banned that weapon?”

The next day.

In the school nurse's office, Shou was told by Minamida of the shocking “decision of the upper management.

“Ah. As I suspected, the higher-ups don't take well to a prolonged stalemate... ...”

“.....Yeah, I see.” It wasn't a future that Shou hadn't imagined at all - not really. Shou knew that he was working against the will of the “higher-ups” who were watching this battle, and he was aware that he was being quite reckless. But he had been able to keep the stalemate going, and he thought that maybe things would continue to go well. However, the reality was not so easy.

“Of course, it would be a different story if you were actively trying to win. In fact, that weapon was more effective than I expected. If you use it well, there's a chance you could beat Dird and the others .....” Minamida lowered his eyebrows, looking a little uncomfortable saying it.

“..... In the end, it turned out just as Minamida-san said it would.” Shou slumped his shoulders and mumbled, to which Minamida quickly replied.

“This fight is a decision best made by those who decide it. So, even if Dird and the girls agree with you and stop fighting, they will probably be dismissed, and another candidate will come along. So, Kukoma-kun, please remember that this battle is only to determine the winner.”

“.....That means everything I did was for nothing, right?”

As expected, Shou was depressed, but Minamida said.

“—No. That's not true.”

“.....What?” Shou looked up at Minamida.

“As a matter of fact, in exchange for the banning of that acoustic weapon, Kukoma-kun will be granted a single item, whatever he wants for this battle.”

At this shocking statement, Shou's eyes grew wide. “What ... ..., anything?

“Yeah. I don't care if it's a weapon, a new rule, anything. For example, you could use state-of-the-art equipment that the others don't have, or you could add rule conditions that are convenient for you. Oh, and of course, anything that's too unreasonable is a no-no.”

“So ....., is it?” In Minamida's story, Shou felt like he had found a way out. He didn't know what would be at the end of that path. The idea was very vague, and there was no concrete image yet. But Shou had a feeling that the decision of this story would probably decide the outcome of the battle.

“U～～～～n..... And, but, what's good .....?” Anyway, Shou's expression of frantic thinking had somehow changed to a cheerful one.

Seeing this, Minamida also relaxed his expression a little and said, “Haha. I'm not asking you to decide right now. You should take your time and think about it.”

“Oh, so, is that so?”

“Yes. The next battle is in a month, after all.”

“... ...What?” Shou hadn't heard that story yet.

(Why did it have to be so far in advance?) Minamida quickly cleared up that question for him.

“It's the final exam of the term. It doesn't matter if you're in space or on Earth, the main thing for students is still schoolwork.”

“... ... eh!?” To be honest, Shou had completely forgotten about such things... ...

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“Oh no. I hate exams. I don't want exams!” Final exams were coming up. After school, Dird was lying down on her desk, looking depressed as her classmates were all in exam mode and started to get nervous.

“If you like tests, you’re a true hentai!”

Apparently, Dird and Alea didn't want to take the test. Of course, Shou didn't want to do either if he could help it, so he listened to them with a wry smile.

“Final exams, huh?” ..... Do they have such things in space?”

Shou casually remarked. Then Apuesta and Palty replied.

“Yes, there is. It's only natural to make sure you're learning what they teach you... ...”

“Yes, that's true. It may be in a slightly different form than on Earth, but these regular exams do exist.”

“That's right... ...”

Shou thought that space was an unexpectedly hard place to live in.

“Woo! Hey guys! Why don't we all study for the exam together? We can teach each other things!” Dird, who had just gotten up, suddenly suggested, and Shou, who had always wanted to be in such a situation, was all for it, but...

“Huh~? It's going to be a group of idiots who can't even study for exams on their own, and we're just going to teach them, right?”

“Oh, Alea, that's terrible! Who are you talking about?”

“Oh come on, you're asking me that? I hope you appreciate my kindness in not telling you.”

“Ugh Alea's messing with me! Idiot! Potato sprouts!”

“Hey, what's with the bad language? You're really getting on my nerves!” Palty said with a troubled hand on her cheek as the two argued noisily.

“Dird, since the curriculum is different in each country, the content of the examinations for each of us is different, you know? There's no point in having too many study sessions, though... ...”

“Ugh. I don't think I'll be able to study if I'm alone... ... Besides, I'll miss Pī and Piyo the whole time!”

Alea was the first to react to Dird's eyes welling up as if she was about to cry. “Well, I don't mind, but you know what? My brain is different from Dird's, and I get a lot of high scores without studying.”

Dird looked puzzled.

“... ... It's not like I can't concentrate when I'm alone either... ...” Apuesta continued, raising a small hand in agreement.

Palty smiled slightly at Alea and Apuesta's comments and said, “Yes, you're right. It might be a little difficult to teach each other ... ..., but I think we can boost each other's morale by getting together ... ..., so if you don't mind, Shou, let's do it. Can we?”

With those words, everyone turned to look at Shou. Naturally, there was no way Shou could refuse, and there was no reason for him to. “I don't mind either. I've actually been kind of longing for something like that.”

As he said this, Dird's expression brightened, and she stood up. “Wow! Thanks~ everyone ～～

～～!”

She hugged everyone, which made her classmates look at her strangely. Mike was the only one who said, “Damn it! I'm late! What the hell were they talking about? I want to jump into that circle too!” He clenched his fists in frustration.

“Oh my God, it's too hot, get away from me! Where are we going to meet? First of all, Shou's house is out, right?” Alea said, looking towards the now empty podium. They all nodded in unison.

“Surely ... ... there's no way you can study with Sensei, the source of all that noise, around... ...” Shou's persuasive words made Dird and the others nod their heads again.

“Hey, why don't we take turns at everyone's house? I think it would be fun!” Dird suggested, and it was immediately adopted.

“Well then, it's decided. Before exams, classes will be until noon like today, so let's all go home once and get together.”

“Yeah, yeah! Then whose house should we go to first? It's going to be fun!”

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They decided on Dird's house as the first meeting place.

With his laptop and Pī and Piyo's incubator, Shou was on his way to Dird's house. “Ha~ ... ... Come to think of it, this is the first time I've ever been to a girl's house... ... I've never been allowed in Himeko-chan's house, and ... ...”

Shou's heart was already beating fast with nervousness and excitement. The more he thought about it, the stronger it became. He grinned slightly at the thought of what would happen if his parents asked him to take care of Dird. Eventually, he arrived in front of the house Dird told him about. It was a very ordinary house. With a gulp, Shou rang the bell softly.

“Hi, welcome!” Dird burst out with a cheerful voice, and Shou's nervousness disappeared for a bit.

“Ah, Shou! Shou was the first one to arrive~ Welcome Pī and Piyo too! Come on, come on, don't be shy, come in~”

“Ah, um, yes. I'm sorry to bother you.” Shou was dragged up to the house by Dird.

“Oh, welcome.”

“Oh, good afternoon!”

Shou was ushered into Dird's living room. He was greeted by an elderly man who was smiling and reading a newspaper. He was one of the craftsmen who had worked on Miron's cruiser

house.

“I have a lot of things to prepare, so Shou can talk to Grandpa for a while~!”

“Oh, Dird.”

Dird disappeared, and Shou sat down on the cushion the old man had suggested, feeling a little uncomfortable.

“You've come a long way today, it's the first time Dird has brought a man into the house.”

“Uh. I've never been taken into a women’s home before. You're Dird's grandfather, aren't you? I'm surprised.”

“Hmm? I don't know. A more distant ancestor, to be exact.”

“... ... huh?”

Then, to his surprise, the old man told him that he was an ancestor of about five generations before Dird.

“... ... Eeeeeh!? Eh, eh!?”

“Ho ho ho. Well, that would be a surprise, wouldn't it?”

Shou's eyes almost popped out of his head at that. So, while they waited for Dird to come back - the old man told him many stories about his life.

He was forced to take on his current role to protect his family members from an incredibly vicious pirate in his immediate family. He had been depressed in his original home due to the pressure, but now he was slowly returning to his original cheerful personality. The main reason for this was that he came to the island and became one of Shou's caretakers. “.....Dird.” Shou's expression hardened at the seriousness of the conversation. He felt like he was being reminded of the weight of what she was carrying.

“Don't look so scared. And just between you and me, I'm actually rooting for you. I think it's best for you to win.”

“... ...? Me, really?”

“Well, Jurai's First Empress and the man who destroyed the pirates ... ... may not be unique to Earth, but at least everyone who has come up from here into space has had a great impact on the universe. So, if the winner is decided to be an earthling, I think everyone will be satisfied in a certain way.”

“I see... ... So that's what you mean... ...”

“Ah! Grandpa, it's time to go!” That's when Dird came back and interrupted their conversation.

“Oh, I see. I'm off then. I'll see you later.”

“Oh, yes. Thank you for talking to me.”

Smiling, the old man went off to work, with Dird and Shou seeing him off.

“Ehehe, sorry for keeping you waiting Shou, I was just preparing some snacks and tea. I think everyone should be here by now, so why don't we sit and wait?”

“Ah, yes.” The two went back to the living room.

Shou smiled when she saw Dird happily bringing in snacks and a teapot. (This kind of smile suits Dird, after all... ...)

“Huh? Oh, that ... ... Shou?” Then Dird looked at Shou as if she was startled. Then Shou realized.

“Could it be that ... ... I just said that out loud?”

“Uh, yeah ... ...”

“Whoa! Sorry, I'm sorry, I suddenly said something weird!”

“Uh-huh. I'm glad. Thanks, Shou.”

“Dird ... ...”

Dird's embarrassed smile was still very cute. Just as such a good atmosphere was building up, the doorbell rang.

“Oh, my, it looks like everyone's here! I'll go get them!”

“Uh-huh.”

Then Alea, Apuesta, and Palty arrived, and the study session with the five of them finally began...

“That's why it's different! Why are you doing that kind of math there, you idiot!”

“I don't understand!”

In the end, as most of them expected, Shou and his friends all had to teach Dird, who was the only one whose grades were catastrophically bad, how to study... ...

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“Hey Shou-kun. I'm starving.” About that time, Miron came out of her cruiser house with a coquettish voice. However, Shou, who usually prepared the meals, was not there.

“... ... Huh? Pī-chan and Piyo-chan aren't there either... ...” Miron walked over to the simple

cooking table near Shou's tent and found that there was a note on it.

“Dear Miron Sensei,
Pī and Piyo and I will be studying for our exams with Dird and the others today.
You will have to prepare your own dinner.
Shou.”

“Hmmm ..... studying for exams. So, you thought I was going to interfere, so you went without telling me. Hmm! That's fine! If you want, I'll eat all the top grade A5 Matsusaka beef I secretly ordered the other day by myself!” In a fit of rage, Miron took out a large hunk of meat from the refrigerator and began to cook it by herself. She wasn't in the mood for anything fancy, so she simply seasoned the meat with salt and pepper. When the steak was done cooking, she gobbled it up with her mouth wide open.

“──Wow! That's high-class Japanese beef! The quality of the flavor is so different! That's awesome!” Miron gobbled up the food, daring to shout out loud. However, ... her voice soon died down, and her hand, too, stopped before she realized it.

“..... I feel like an idiot.”

After finishing cleaning up properly, Miron quickly went back inside the cruiser house──.

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The next day. After finishing his studies at school, Shou was on his way to Alea's house, when he happened to bump into Minamida.

“Wow. Studying for exams with everyone on a rotating basis? That's quite an impressive thing.”

“Yes. At my house, it's ... ... just because Sensei is there.”

“Haha, I see... ... But if you're too wicked, you might be scared later, you know?”

“In that case, I'd like to ask Minamida-san to handle it.”

“Ugh, Kukoma-kun, now you're starting to say it... ...”

It was when they were having such a funny conversation.

“..... Oh? Are you Kukoma Shou? Are you Minamida?”

“Huh?” They both look towards the direction they were called from.

There stood a beautiful woman with a baby on her back.

“Hmm, nice to meet you. Alea has always been a great help to me. I am Alea's sister, Luretta Balta.”

She seemed to be on her way home from shopping with her baby and was carrying a lot of

luggage. But Shou also had her hands full with study materials and the incubator for Pī and Piyo. So, Minamida offered to carry Luretta's luggage, and the three of them headed side-by-side to Alea's house.

“Thank you, Minamida. It's a lot of work for one person... ... Sorry. It helps.”

“No, I can handle this much.”

Luretta smiled at him, and Minamida smiled back.

Then, the baby that Luretta was carrying on her back screamed, “Uh-oh!” as the baby reached for Shou's hand - the incubator.

“Haha. I wonder if she's interested in the chicks?” Shou moved the incubator a little closer, and the baby giggled happily. Seeing this, Minamida and Luretta also relaxed.

So Shou asked Luretta, “Haha, you have a lovely child. Um, what's her name?”

“Hmm, thank you Shou-kun. This is Melissa, she's Alea's niece.”

“Wow... ... You're right, she does look a bit like Alea.”

“I hope she doesn't turn out to be such a tomboy.”

Shou and Minamida both laughed at that. The three of them continued to talk as they slowly walked down the road to Alea's house.

“And yet, it would have been unthinkable for them to have a study session together just a little while ago, you know? That's why I was so surprised when Alea told me about this.”

“Is that so?” Shou said.

“Alea and the others have their Guild's interests at heart, and they were enemies, too.” Minamida added those words while holding Luretta's luggage in his hand, and Luretta gave a small nod.

“Yes, that's right. It was especially bad for Dird-chan. That said, I feel like Alea hated it unilaterally.”

Dird and Alea are ... ...?” Shou didn't believe the story right away. It was hard to believe that two people who were so close to each other could have originally been like that.

“But it can't be helped, you know. The drastic change in living conditions... ... the pressure of being a representative... ... a tense situation with a rival team... ... Alea had to deal with all of that by herself. She kept all that to herself and wouldn't tell me the truth even in front of me. She's a smart girl, and that's why she doesn't want to rely on others... ... I'm sure she was under a lot of stress by herself.”

“So, it was ... ...” He heard the same story at Dird's house. After all, all of these girls have a huge weight on their shoulders. “But Alea is amazing. She's the youngest of the four, but she's always

working hard."

"Huh, thanks Shou-kun. But you know, I'm embarrassed to tell you this, but the reason why ... ... Alea took on the role of representative is because of the huge debt that this girl's father created."

"What?"

Luretta continued her story while comforting the baby - Melissa. "Minamida-san is GP, so maybe you know him - he was an operator on a ship called Kamidake, Alan, ..."

"Buh!!!" Minamida suddenly blew his top at the name.

"What? Minamida-san, do you know that guy?"

"No, no... ... Well, there are rumors. So, what's he up to now?"

"He disappeared, leaving behind a large debt. I don't want to look for him anymore either." Luretta replied curtly. Then she talked some more about Alea and Dird's relationship.

The two clashed not long after arriving on Earth, but Alea's inferior strength caused Dird to quickly quit the fight. Feeling humiliated by this, Alea deliberately let Dird escape while hunting her down during their first battle for supremacy, just to get even.

"After that, she started to compete with Dird ... ..., but the two of them, um, she changed after Shou-kun came to this island."

"What? Me, really?"

"Yes, through Shou-kun, she started to go out with Dird-chan in private... ... See, Dird-chan has a bit of a wild side, right? Maybe that's why she gradually got rid of her poison... ..."

"Haha. I can understand that." Shou could relate to that; he felt that anyone would be like that if they were with Dird. Her innocence was like a dog that misses you, and it's very hard to be angry with her.

"Huh. Shou-kun, please continue to be good friends with her, she's a little bit naughty, but she's really a sweet girl."

"Ha, yes. It was nice to meet you too!" Shou straightened his posture and she smiled happily at him.

"Oh...! Wait, sister!

"Oh, Alea."

It seems that they had already arrived at the front of Alea's house, and Alea, who was apparently waiting at the entrance, saw them and came running.

"Hey, I thought you were late, what are you doing! You're with Shou and Minamida, too!"

“Hmm. We bumped into each other on the street a while ago. They helped me with my luggage... ...”

“Oh, don't worry about that! Everyone is already here, so hurry up and come!”

“Ah, yes. I'll see you later, Minamida-san!” Shou was pushed by Alea and ended up going up to her house.

“I'm going in first!” Alea took all of her sister's belongings from Minamida and hurriedly disappeared into the house.

Minamida and Luretta, who were left behind, laughed together.

In the living room, Dird and her friends were already there and waved lightly at Shou.

He thought the study session was going to start right away, but the girls became enamored with Luretta's child, Melissa, who had returned to the house.

“Wow ～～～～ cute ～～～～～～～～!”

“Yeah ... ...”

“Yes ... ... she's so adorable ... ...”

Perhaps their maternal instincts were tickled, Dird, Apuesta, and Palty each looked into the baby's face with a smile, and Alea had a somewhat unsettled and embarrassed expression on her face. Seeing this, Luretta giggled.

“Alea, please change her diaper.”

“Yes, yes, I understand.” Alea replied a little bluntly to Luretta, who was in the kitchen preparing snacks and drinks for Shou and the others.

Shou and the others cheered at Alea's skillful diaper changing, which caused Alea to turn red and shout, “Don't look at me!”

In fact, with the technology of the universe, there was no need to change diapers, but they intentionally used diapers that needed to be changed in order to promote skin-to-skin communication between mother and child.

“Hey hey Alea, is this baby a boy or a girl? Is it a girl?”

“It's a girl.”

“Oh, really!”

Dird sat next to Alea and peeked at the diaper change. Alea got mad at her again, “So don't look!” But Dird doesn't seem to have learned her lesson at all.

“Look, look, look, look Shou! She's a girl!”

“Hey, look at her! You idiot! You need to relearn common sense and decency from when you were a baby!”

“Oh, my God!”

They looked like good friends ... ..., not only Shou and the other girls, but also Luretta, who brought them a large tray of snacks and drinks from the kitchen, were looking at them with very smiling eyes.

Alea finished the diaper change with flying colors and immediately said. “Yes, I'm done! Alright then, let's start studying! Dird, I'm going to test you to see if you remember everything I taught you yesterday! If you don't, you're out of snacks!”

“What? We're going to have a test for studying for the exam at ～～～～!?”

Everyone couldn't help but laugh at that.

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That evening, on the deck of Miron's cruiser house, a table covered with a white cloth, beautifully decorated with candles and flowers, was crammed with what looked like a very expensive meal. Miron, dressed in a nightgown, elegantly took her seat, opened a bottle of wine that also looked expensive, and poured the red liquid into his glass.

“Hmph. You can't eat food like this at those girls' place, Shou-kun.” Miron first enjoyed the wine for its aroma, then slowly sipped it. “... ... Huh. Hmph ... ... ahahahahahahahahahaha ～～～～～～!”

Miron laughed into the moonlit night, but then she drank the wine with gusto and eventually plopped down in her chair. There was no longer a trace of elegance. “... ... Oh, boring ... ...” Miron mumbled, and began to eat quietly.

The Cabbits were staring at Miron from a distance.

“This is ... ... maybe, just maybe, onee-chan!” F looked at Miron and her sisters alternately, as if she was somewhat excited.

“Huh. It's just like I was staring at you!”

“And, though, I don't think that she'll give up on her own dreams so easily... ...”

“... ... Let's go home soon. If we make too much noise, we'll be discovered... ...” D mumbled, jumping up and down and leaving the place.

“Oh, wait, D-neechan~!” F chased after her, followed by M and K.

“After all, ...Shou-kun needs to work hard here too.” M said as she glanced at Miron and returned home with the others.

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The next morning.

“Wow ....., that's amazing.”

When Shou left his tent, he was quite surprised to see all the tasty food laid out on the table that Miron had brought from the cruiser house. It looked like the kind of authentic Japanese food that would be served at a high-class traditional Japanese inn. However, he had never eaten at such a place, so this was only the knowledge he had gained from a pamphlet.

“Huh! This is no problem for me!”

“It's just like breakfast... oh, it's delicious!” Shou tried a few of the dishes and was pleasantly surprised by the taste of them.

“Hey, Shou-kun. Why are you so surprised? Do you think it's surprising that I can make all these dishes?”

“Oh, no. See, in a case like this, it's standard to look good but be super bad.”

“That's rude! I know all the delicacies in the world, so there's no way I would serve something bad! That's the kind of thing that only a fool would serve without even tasting it!”

“Haha, I'm sorry. But Sensei, why did you suddenly decide to cook a meal?”

Miron gave a slight “ugh” and then crossed her arms. “Hmph! I didn't mean anything by it! I'm just proving that I can cook by myself without Shou-kun and Palty and the others!”

(.....) Oh. That's some sarcasm about being left out. Shou felt a little bad about his attitude towards Miron. As Minamida had also said that he was afraid of what would happen if he treated her too harshly.

They started their morning meal together.

Shou glanced at Miron in the middle of it, and Miron nodded her head.

“Hmm? What is it, Shou-kun? Do you have any complaints about this delicious food?”

“Oh, no. I was just thinking that ... ... that's a cute apron.”

“Eh?”

The apron that Miron was still wearing was white and light pink with frills. It looked like something that a newlywed would wear.

Miron blushed slightly and said, “This, this is something my sister gave me for my fourteenth birthday! I don't care! I know it wouldn't look good on me anyway!”

“What? I think it looks good on you.”

“.....eh?”

Miron's eyes fluttered at Shou's honest words.

“Sensei? What's wrong with you?”

“What? Oh, it's nothing.” Miron, who had been frozen in place, immediately huffed and started to eat.

Then Shou noticed something and asked. “Hmm? Huh? But you were fourteen years old when you got it, right? I don't feel uncomfortable at all with the length and all, but could it be ... ...?”

“I grew rapidly after I graduated from college at twelve. I got it after that, so I can wear it like this. Well, my breasts were a little smaller back then, though.” Miron rubbed her breasts as she said this, and Shou looked away quickly.

“Yeah, I see ... ... But for now, I'm relieved. You see, there was also the matter of the swimsuit before, so I was wondering what I would do if you were wearing a very revealing apron … ...”

“... Huh-huh? A naked apron ... Yes ... I see ... Huh-huh.” Miron smiled at Shou, who winced.

Shou already knew that this was the face of Miron when she was thinking about something ridiculous. Or rather, it was obvious to anyone who saw her that she was suspicious.

“I see. Huh ... ... so tomorrow I'll be in a naked apron or something ..... muh muh muh muh muh.”

“U ... ..., thanks for the food!” He was like a snake, wanting to escape as soon as possible. Shou hurriedly ate his breakfast, picked up his bag and ran to the school.

“Come on! This is my homemade food! Eat some more!”

“Sorry, gotta go!”

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After school that day, Shou received his lunch box from Tomi at school. Normally, when there were only morning classes before exams, students would take their lunches at home, but as long as they made a reservation in advance, Tomi would prepare their lunches for them as usual.

“Thank you very much, Tomi-san.”

“Hohoho. Anyway, Shou-chan, I heard that you've been studying for the exam at Dird-chan and the others' house every day. I'm impressed. It's good to learn while you're young.” Tomi said as Shou was thinking about where to eat his lunch.

“Oh, yes. It's Apuesta's turn today, and we're going after we eat lunch.”

“Apuesta-chan looks so much brighter now that Shou-chan is here.”

“Is that so?” Shou had heard the same thing from Dird and Alea. After all, Dird and Alea had been a great help to him. He was glad that he was having a positive influence on them.

“Yeah, I've known Apuesta's parents for a long time in business. I've known her since she was this little.” With that, Tomi held her hand below her waist.

“Oh, ... you did?”

“Yeah ... ... Yeah, maybe I should tell Shou-chan about this, too. Shou-chan, if you have time, can you accompany me for a bit?”

“Huh? Ah, yes.”

With that, Tomi accompanied Shou to the observation deck outside, where there was a covered table. It had become one of Shou's favorite places, overlooking the blue sky and sea. There, Shou listened to Tomi's story as he enjoyed his lunch.

“There are many kinds of space pirates, like on this island where many of them make their living from pelagic fishing, and their parents are often away from home for months at a time doing their work. And some parents can't come home because of accidents, fighting, or being captured. So, there are childcare facilities that collectively take care of the children left behind.”

“A childcare facility ... ...?” Shou listened intently to Tomi's story as she spoke while looking at the sea.

“That's right. Originally, it was supposed to be run and maintained by the pirates who founded it, but there were times when parents who went out to work suffered misfortune one after another, and it often interfered with the operation of the facility. In the end, however, the guild collapsed, and the childcare facility was closed ... ... and reorganized.

“That's ... ..., not Apuesta's ... ...?” He asked, and Tomi looked a little sad.

“For the kids who grew up in that facility, they're like siblings to the ones who are there. The ones who have parents are still there, but the ones whose parents are in prison and can't come

home right away, or the ones who are orphaned, they have a lot of trouble. Apuesta-chan's parents are trying to keep such children from falling apart, but the collapse of the guild has also affected their business."

"So maybe that's why Apuesta is in this fight?"

"That's what I mean. I've heard that's how they've managed to keep the facility running for now. But even so, there's no money to go around other than the bare minimum of living expenses. All the money I make from my business here is used to buy birthday presents for the kids at the orphanage. What do you think, good boy?"

Shou was taken aback by the facts that Tomi told him. "I didn't know that... ... I didn't know anything about that... ..."

"Yup. But now that Shou-chan has come and helped her, I'm sure she has more room not only for sales but also for her feelings. Maybe that's why she's changing."

Hearing this, Shou became a little impatient. "Oh, I think I've gotten quite a bit of part-time money from ... ... Do, what should I do?"

"Hohoho! That girl has a talent when it comes to business. I'm sure she'll be fine. Don't ever say you'll give it back, okay?"

"Oh, I see ... ... I understand."

Once the scene had lightened and softened a bit, Tomi changed the subject. "Oh yeah, not to mention, I think we should talk about Palty-chan while we're at it."

"Huh? Tomi-san, do you know a lot about Palty too?"

"If anything, I know Palty's situation better." Tomi said with a somewhat mixed look on her face. "Shou-chan, do you know that girl's full name?"

"Oh, ... uh, I think it's Palty Jurai ... ...?"

"Yes. Her name Jurai is a bit special ... ... In fact, she's a direct descendant of the royal family that lost a power struggle and was exiled."

"Huh! Well, then, is Palty perhaps a princess!"

"Shh! That's a forbidden word for her. To the other girls, it seems that she's just a general member of the Jurai Guild that was created by the exiled royal family. You'll have to be careful about what you say about that."

"Ah, ha, yes ... ... sorry. But why ... ...?"

"Actually, you see, Palty-chan's mother is a bit of a problem ... ... Well, that's why she doesn't seem to like the fact that she's a direct descendant."

“So ..... was it?” It was a very delicate part of the deep problem the girls were having. Shou asked, “But ... ... why did you talk to me about it?”

“Hmm? Well, hey ... ...” Tomi thought about something for a bit before saying to Shou, whose chopsticks had stopped before he knew it. “Because it's Shou-chan, right?”

“Eh, ...?”

“In the future, if Shou-chan is one of the representatives of the girls, there will be many things that will happen. If you don't know this story, things will probably be different. So, keep this in mind, Shou-chan.”

“... ... Yes. I understand.” He could kind of understand what Tomi was trying to say. She must be very worried about the girls.

“Hohoho. Don't look so glum. There's good food in front of you, so cheer up, Shou-chan!”

“... ... Yes!” Shou wanted to act in a way that would not betray his intentions, and so he ate his lunch.

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After lunch, Shou hurried off to Apuesta's house with Pī and Piyo. (But then again, everyone on ... ... team came to Earth for a variety of reasons, didn't they? This is certainly not an easy way to stop a fight...) While he was thinking about this, he arrived in front of Apuesta's house. Apuesta came out immediately after he rang the chime.

“──Welcome, Shou, everyone's not here yet, but come on up.”

“Yes, sorry to bother you.”

Apuesta's house was very simple compared to Dird's and Alea's houses, with only minimal furniture. Instead, there were small containers piled up all over the house. One might have mistakenly thought that they had just moved in with some large luggage, but Shou guessed that these containers were probably not that.

“I'm sorry, ... it's a small, embarrassing house, but ... ...”

“Wow, this is amazing. Is this all merchandise by any chance?” Shou asked, and Apuesta gave a small nod. I knew it, Shou thought, and continued with a smile.

“... ... Good! Then I'll have to try harder to sell it next time!”

“Shou... ... Oh, thank you ... ...” Apuesta said, her cheeks flushing with happiness.

As if to put a damper on the atmosphere, the doorbell rang.

“That's not fair! If you're going to study for exams, why don't you just invite me? I thought we were soul mates!”

“No, we're just classmates. .....”

Shou and the rest of the group cringed. At the door of Apuesta's house, besides Dird and the others, Mike and Ichiro were there for some reason.

“Ugh. I didn't know they were coming with us.”

“Why the hell is Mike with us, man?”

“Alea, you're too honest ... ...”

“Yes, you're right. Let's not be too direct with the swearing Alea, it's vulgar.”

“Sorry guys. I'll keep an eye on Mike, so he doesn't get in the way of studying for exams... ...”

Dird looked annoyed, Alea's eyes narrowed, and her mouth twitched, and Apuesta and Palty chided Alea. Ichiro just chuckled.

Mike shook his blond hair out of his face and said in a cool way. “I may look like this, but I'm an excellent student, and I can take care of that silly Dird for you! What do you think? This way, everyone else can study in peace, right?”

“Oh, I'm sure that might be appreciated.”

“OK, that's settled then! Now if you'll excuse me!”

“Oh, no.”

Mike stumbled into Apuesta's house after Alea revealed her true feelings, and Apuesta stared at Alea with a bit of resentment, causing Alea to look away uncomfortably.

“... ... Huh. It can't be helped. Everyone, come on up ... ...” Apuesta said with a sigh, and Shou and the others all followed Mike.

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In fact, Mike and his friends were not the only ones at Apuesta's house at this time.

“Oh no ... ..., you Mike, don't you dare interfere with my role!” Miron had been hiding in the bushes near Apuesta's house for the same reason as Mike: to break into the study group. She was wearing disguise leaves on her head and shoulders to blend in with her surroundings, as if she had military experience. Then Miron had a thought. “But that's weird ... ... Why did Mike barge into Apuesta's house when he could have barged into Dird's or Alea's? Hmm, something is fishy here.” Miron's eyes widened, and she began to move through the bushes.

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“Yes, Dird, you can do it if you try!”

“Wow, you really did it! Thanks Mike~!”

In the living room, Mike was surprisingly good at teaching, and Dird threw up her hands in delight, unable to hide her surprise at how far she had come since Shou and the others had taught her so much without much success.

“Oh, ...” “Hey, seriously, ...” “Wow, ...” “You got the answer right, ...”

“Heh heh! I can do it too! I can do it too! Dird gave a V-sign with both hands, and Shou and the others were a little disappointed by Mike's unexpected success.

“Okay, Dird, now for a little test. You have twenty minutes to solve the problems on this page and this page on ... ... It's an application of what you just did, so if you think about it, you should be able to do it.”

“Yes! I understand, Mike the Great Sensei!”

“Good girl. I'll leave you alone for a while.”

“Oh, I'm going to the bathroom, too, ...”

Seeing Dird's reaction, Mike stood up quickly. Ichiro followed and the two left the living room. But Shou and the others were so amazed at how much Dird had grown that they didn't really pay attention to what the two of them were doing ... ...

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“Ffff ..... ffff ..... ffff ffff ffff ffff ffff ffff!”

“Mike you're being too loud!”

“Oops, sorry about that. I'm sorry, the plan was too brilliant to be successful.”

After leaving the living room, Mike and Ichiro found themselves in what appeared to be a storage room surrounded by a large number of containers.

“I didn't think you were expecting me to break into Apuesta's house on the pretext of studying for exams, and then take advantage of the opportunity when everyone is surprised by Dird's growth to look for products like this ... ...”

“Mike... ..., that's outrageous.” Ichiro smiled at Mike as he explained his plan.

Yes, Mike had only one goal. He wanted to find a pre-ordered item in this container - an adult DVD - and negotiate with the pre-orderer to give it to him before the sale, based on the pre-orderer's name attached to it.

“I'm frankly amazed at Mike's ability to take such action for such a ridiculous reason ... ...”

“Hahaha. Don't give me that kind of credit, I'm amazed at my own talent. Help me out!”

Sighing, Ichiro ignored Mike as he rifled through the containers in the room.

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“Hmmm ... ... I see what’s going on.” Miron peered through the window at the room where Mike and Ichiro were searching for the product. “Well, I'm pretty sure I know what you’re talking about. As a teacher, I have to teach him well here, don't I? Huhuhuhuhu ... ...!” Miron mumbled and pulled a coconut out from somewhere.

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“Shit! It's not here! Where is it? Where's my angel?”

“You say the coolest things, but what you do is the worst ... ...”

They couldn't stay here too long. Mike was in a hurry, but he hadn't found what he was looking for yet, and Ichiro was looking at him like, “Good grief”.

That's when it happened. There was a thud!

“Geez!”

Suddenly, something hit Mike in the head, causing him to fall down with a strange scream. This caused several containers to fall to the floor and their contents to tumble down in pieces.

“Gu..... ya, coconuts?” Pressing his head, Mike saw a single coconut lying close by. Then he heard the window rattle shut. Someone had probably thrown it in.

“Who in the world would play such a prank? Someone with no common sense whatsoever!” Mike was furious.

That's when he heard the voice.

“... ... Mike, what are you doing ... ...?”

Mike shivered and shuddered. Sweat poured out of his body. Fearfully, he looked around.

“Aah! Ah, ah, ap, ap, ap, ap, ap, ap, Apuesta ... ...!”

At the entrance of the room, there was Apuesta's figure.

She had a cold look on her face that could be described as expressionless, and by her side were Shou, Dird, Alea, Palty ... ... and Ichiro.

“I had nothing to do with this,” Ichiro said, shrugging his shoulders as he left the room.

“Apuesta? There's a deeper story behind this ... ... ha, ha, ha.”

“Yes ... ... Then talk to me.”

“What? Oh, well, that's because ... ... well, I'm a tight-lipped guy! You're scaring me with your ... ... eyes! Let's calm down for a moment! Apuesta! Apuesta!”

“Enough with the ... ...”

“Waaaaaaaaaaaa! Wait a minute, Apuesta, wait a minute!”

Then it was all resolved with a weighty thud and Mike's awful screaming ... ...

Shou and the others removed Mike, who had fainted, leaving Ichiro in charge. As they were cleaning up the container that Mike had vandalized, Shou noticed the presence of coconuts that had fallen on the spot.

“Hmm? How did it get here ... ...?”

“... ... Ah. Could it be?” Apuesta said, as if she had thought of something. “Alea, do you have your small explorer with you right now?”

“Hmm? Oh, I see. I do. I'll take care of it.” Alea immediately nodded and went back to the living room, followed by Shou and the others. She took out a compact device and a notebook from her luggage, opened the living room window and unleashed the device. It flew quickly into the sky.

“Huh? What's that?”

“You'll find out soon enough. Just watch.” Alea quickly used her laptop to run some software.

Then an image of the surroundings of Apuesta's house appeared on it.

“Oh, ... that's it!” When Shou finally understood, he found Miron hiding in the bushes in the image. She seemed to be doing very careful mimicry, but her prominent blonde hair was not completely hidden. “Miron Sensei, what are you doing?”

“I wonder if it's Sensei hide-and-seek?”

“Of course not, you idiot, Miron must have thrown some coconuts in and hit Mike with them.”

“It doesn't look like she's coming in ... ... What should we do ... ...?”

“Well, I suppose I should thank her for stopping ... ... Mike, but ... ...”

As expected, her hiding in the bushes was too suspicious. No one in the room wanted anything to do with Miron right now if they could help it.

“──Okay. Let's pretend we didn't see anything because we don't want her to come out by poking around badly☆”

All of them nodded silently to Alea, who gave a fearless thumbs-up.

When the explorer returned, the five of them resumed their study session.

“I don't want to go back to ... ... today, though ... ...”

Alea and Palty were surprised to hear Shou's words, “What?” asked Dird, “What? Are you staying over?” Dird nodded her head, and Apuesta turned red and slumped over.

“No ... ...! No, that's not what I meant! Shou then frantically explained what had happened this morning: that Miron had suddenly cooked a sumptuous meal, that she had some dubious plans, and that she was depressed that he was leaving.

“Naked apron? Why do you wear an apron when you're naked? Is that a hobby of Sensei's?” Dird's innocent remark, however, was passed over by Shou and the others.

“In case you're wondering, there's a tent that we used before ... ... Shou, then ... ...” Apuesta mumbled to him, to which Alea quickly responded.

“But, you know, if you stay out overnight without permission, won't that give Miron an excuse to break in? It's going to be more trouble than it's worth.”

“True ... ...,” they all agreed again.

“You're right ... ... We can't despise Miron Sensei any more than we already do ... ... Tomorrow morning, let's all go to Shou's house. Also, I'm interested in the sumptuous food that Sensei makes. I'd like to check it out.” Palty showed a sense of defiance, her hands clasped tightly together.

“I'm all about the naked apron! I'd love to see Sensei's naked apron!”

“What are you talking about, Dird? Are you that type of person?”

“Which kind? I don't know, but it sounds interesting...”

Shou and the others couldn't help but laugh at Dird's innocent remark.

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The next morning. Shou was shivering and praying in his tent. (Everyone ..... come quickly! It's not good to be alone with that woman ...!)

Shou sneaked a peek out of the tent and saw ... ... that Miron was preparing breakfast in front of a simple cooking table with her apron.

As if Shou's prayers were answered, the girls arrived just in time.

“Sensei, good morning!”

“! What are you doing here? You guys just barged in here out of nowhere!”

The girls walked up to Miron, and Dird looked at her curiously.

“Wow, Sensei, that's really cool! Is that a naked apron?”

Dird pulled up her apron, and everyone there - even Shou, who was peeking in from inside the tent - saw what was underneath. Naturally, Shou let out a “puuu”.

“Hey, Dird, what are you doing?”

“Wow, you're not wearing anything underneath. You're really naked! Sensei, you get so mad when I come to school without panties, it's not fair!”

“Huh? Even if you say it's not fair, ...”

“Hey, what are you doing, you idiot!”

Alea grabbed Dird by the neck and pulled her away, Alea and Apuesta looked dumbfounded as Dird let out a disappointed “Ahhh”.

“Wait, Palty? What's this all about?”

Miron said, looking unusually flustered, and Palty replied, “Yes ... ...”

“Well, actually, Shou told me about Sensei's cooking, and I'm interested in it ... ...”

“What? For my food?”

“Yes. I've been interested in Earth's cuisine for a long time, and more importantly, Shou praised it very highly, so I was hoping that you could teach me as well ... ... Is that too much trouble for you?”

“Oh, really? Shou-kun likes my cooking?” Although she was trying to look calm, Miron couldn't hide her happiness as she blinked repeatedly. “Huh, huh! Well, then I guess I have no choice! It's okay, right? Let's see what I can do with my hands!”

“Yes. But, Sensei, it's not safe to cook in that outfit, and Dird might get amused and flip it open again, so you should change your clothes before that happens ... ...”

“Yeah. That's true, too. It can't be helped. I'll have to worry about distressing Shou-kun another time.”

(Wow! Go, Palty!) Shou, who had been secretly watching from inside the tent, struck a guts pose, and Palty glanced at him and smiled. It was the smile of a goddess to Shou ... ...

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After school that day, Shou picked up his lunch from Tomi again and ate in his favorite spot, the observation deck by the schoolyard. He returned to the tent and took Pī and Piyo for a leisurely walk to Palty's house, where today’s study session was to be held.

On the way there, “Excuse me, are you Kukoma Shou-sama?”

“Whoa? Huh? Ah, yes, ...”

Suddenly, an elderly man in a sober kimono-like attire appeared, blocking Shou's way. To Shou's surprise, the man bowed his head and said, “I am the butler of the Jurai compound. I will show you to the house. Come this way, ...” The man's words had a condescending, somewhat inscrutable force to them.

(Is he from Palty's house??) Shou thought about it, and instead of disobeying, he quietly walked after the man.

Eventually, they arrived at a much larger mansion than he had expected. It was an elegantly dressed house that could have been described as magnificent, and Shou was overwhelmed by its appearance.

“This way, please.”

He was then led to a room that was probably the most luxurious in the house. Just looking at the interior with its many glittering ornaments, he could sense that it was probably a very special room.

“I have brought Kukoma Shou-sama with me.”

“Thank you for your time.”

The butler bowed and retreated to a corner of the room.

A woman dressed very elegantly suddenly appeared on the large monitor in the room.

(! Could it be .....!) Shou recognized her at a glance, for she looked a lot like someone Shou knew.

“Nice to meet you, Kukoma Shou, welcome.” Her voice also sounded somewhat like hers. Then she said. “I am Palty's mother. Please forgive me for this form of greeting.”

I knew it, Shou thought. Then he gulped nervously and hurriedly introduced himself. “Well, it's nice to meet you too! I'm Kukoma Shou! I will always be indebted to Palty...”

But in the middle of his speech, she interrupting him. “Greetings are fine. I've heard about your recent successes, and I've heard that you've been going toe-to-toe with not only Palty, but the other representatives as well ... ...”

“I assume you are referring to the war,” Shou said, his tone grim.

“I'm going to ask you to do something for Palty. If you do that, she'll have a much better chance of winning.”

“Yeah, ...” Shou cringed at those words.

“She's been a little reluctant and fed up. So, I want you to work for Palty as hard as you can. Isn't

that good?" The emotionless look in her eyes was not a "request" at all. It was just an order.

That was why Shou was convinced. He remembered what Tomi had told him yesterday, about Palty not wanting to be a princess and worrying about the house, which was probably ... ...

"Mother!" At that moment, a girl entered the room, kicking the door wildly open.

"Palty!" Had she heard the story from somewhere?

Their eyes met, and Palty lowered her eyebrows apologetically, then quickly glared at the monitor with an angry expression. It was an expression that was unlike her normally mild-mannered face.

"Mother! What the hell are you doing ... ... with Shou in here!"

"What do you mean? I was just asking him for a favor."

"A favor? Don't you think that's embarrassing?"

The woman on the other side of the monitor replied with a completely nonchalant face. "What are you getting all riled up about? This is a good opportunity for him. In the first place, what can a mere Japanese from an early civilization - and only one of them - do?"

"He's brought the battle to a standstill by himself!"

"But from what I've heard, the use of that acoustic weapon has been banned ... ... I'm sure you can already see the end of that person. If that's the case, it's best to surrender to my guild while you still can."

"What ... ... Shou! Banned means ... ...!?"

"Uh, yeah ... ... it's true. Sorry, I'm late to tell you ... ..."

"Oh, I see. I understand. I'm sorry, but I'm done talking about this. Now, Shou, let's go." Palty took his hand. Then a voice came from the monitor.

"Kukoma Shou, you know that you are at a disadvantage. Now, come to my side."

"No, Mother. Kukoma Shou, you know you are at a disadvantage. But if that was all we had, we wouldn't be in this situation."

"... ... What do you mean?"

"I can't talk about it here due to confidentiality issues ... ... Now then!" Palty declared, standing in front of Shou and facing her own mother. "If you do anything like this again in the future, I will decline this role."

"... ...Kuh! You, my daughter, are ... ...!"

“Come on, let's go, Shou.”

“Uh, yeah ... ...”

Palty, who ignored her mother's words, took him by the hand and they left the room.

“I'm sorry, Shou.....” Shou and Palty stopped in an open area a short walk from the house. Palty didn't want to stay in the mansion. Shou understood this feeling. Pī and Piyo, who had been quiet earlier, also started crying “PiyoPiyo” after they went outside.

“I'm really sorry ... ... for making you feel bad ... ...” Palty bowed deeply and Shou hurried to get her to raise her head, “It's okay.”

“Thank you ... ... I know you're confused, right? Actually, ... that ... ...”

“Oh, no, I'm fine. I can kind of understand.”

Shou said to Palty, who looked uncomfortable saying it, and broke off the conversation.

“What .....?”

“Look, everyone has one or two or a few dozen things they don't want to say, haha, so I'm fine. I don't mind, you know, and you don't have to worry about it either Palty.”

“Shou ... ... thank you ... ...” Palty realized that Shou probably knew some of her background, and his concern had reached her, and Shou could see it in Palty's expression as he smiled at her.

“Besides, it's true that Palty's mom is right. I'll be in trouble if I lose that weapon.”

“Hmm. I'm sure you can fight just fine without that thing.”

“Yeah, is that so? Well, it's true that our engineers are excellent.”

“No. I didn't mean it like that.”

“What? Then what?”

“... ... Hmm, yes, you're right. I'll give you one hint as an apology for this time: Shou has a special ability.”

“Special ability? ... ... Well, what's that? Is there such a thing?”

Palty giggled happily at Shou, who was seriously worried. Apparently, she was already in a good mood.

“Hmm, the girls will be here soon, so let's go to my house. It's not that mansion, so please don't worry.”

“Huh? Oh, is that right?”

“Hmm, yes.”

So Palty took Shou's hand again and ran. Shou, who was walking fast, thought about what he had just done as he followed her.

(Special ability ... ... I'm good at? The only thing I'm good at is rock-paper-scissors.)

“Let's go then. I was still in the middle of preparing the snack.”

“Ah, yes. Yeah, right.” Nodding, Shou stopped thinking for now and headed towards Palty's house.

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Palty's house was not too far from the mansion. It was a small and simple house compared to the mansion, but it felt more comfortable to Shou. Also, Palty's house had almost no partitions, and was completely one room. It was a typical layout for a claustrophobic woman.

“That's just like Palty's house. Oh, I'm sorry, can I use the bathroom for a minute?”

“Yes, the bathroom is upstairs. You can go up that way.”

“Yeah, thanks.”

When he went up the stairs he found a strange room about eight tatami mats in size, surrounded by slit, half-open walls. The windows were large and well placed so that they could not be seen from the outside, so that the room did not feel claustrophobic. The partition between the bathroom and the toilet was minimal, so it could almost be called a single room.

Translators note: 8 tatami mats are about 133 sq ft. Palty’s upstairs room is about 10 x 13 feet.

(I see. It's like a bathroom for Palty. As he nodded to himself, the downstairs suddenly became noisy, and Shou knew that Dird and the girls had arrived, so he finished his business and went downstairs.

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The next day after school. Shou and the others were all together in the classroom discussing the upcoming exam.

“Hey, what are we going to do today? We have exams tomorrow, right?”

“Yeah, Apuesta, Palty, where are we going to study today?”

“In order, Dird's house ... ..., but ... ...”

“That's not a good place to start, either. And Shou's house is also ... ...”

“I'm sorry, but I have a troublesome person in my house ... ...”

As everyone laughed at Shou's joke, a voice came from behind. “Would you like to do it at my place?”

“Whoa!” Shou and the others were surprised by the sudden voice. It was Minamida.

“Mi, Minamida-san? Why are you at school?”

“Hi, Tomi's got a bit of a back problem. So, I brought your lunch for her.”

Shou and the others were surprised to hear that, because they were worried about Tomi's safety.

“Yeah, but I heard she'll be fine as long as she rests for a few days, so don't worry.”

Shou and the others were relieved; Minamida gave a small smile.

“So, I guess you guys are looking for a place to study. You can use my house if you like.”

“But wouldn't that be a bother?”

“No, not at all. I can watch Kukoma-kun study, too ... ... And she can.”

Thereupon, the Cabbit on Minamida's shoulder puffed out her chest proudly and squealed, “Miah!”

“Actually, she's got a teaching license. So, she wants to teach you guys.”

“Eeeeee!”

“Miah!”

“I'm on it!” And a small translucent monitor plate appeared in front of Cabbit.

“Ya, I knew you weren't a normal animal.” Alea's statement probably made Dird, Apuesta, and Palty feel the same way.

“Haha. It seems like I'm kind of dying to participate in this event called studying for exams. I won't bother you, so could you please go along with him?”

“No, it's not a problem. Um, I'd be grateful if you could do the same.”

“Okay, that's settled then. Take your time after you finish your lunch. I'll be waiting for you.” With that, Minamida left the lunchboxes that Shou and the others had ordered and left the classroom.

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After finishing their lunch, Shou and the girls walked directly to Minamida's house. This time Pī and Piyo were with Miron. Dird and her friends were talking while walking there.

“But I'm surprised that M-chan and the others are teaching us!”

“And you even have a teaching license, right? I wonder if that thing might be a prosthetic body.”

“... ... of his wives?”

“Uh, ... I believe Minamida-san had a big wedding before, right?”

“To Jurai's royal family, to Amane Kaunaq, to Balta's princess who was a famous pirate ... ...”

As Palty listed them one by one, Alea added, “Oh.”

“And the priestess of Melmas. That makes four. Oh, but didn't the wedding have to be canceled because of something that happened?”

“The ceremony was canceled, but they're still ... ... married, I believe ... ...”

Shou, who had been listening to Dird and the others, was shocked the whole time.

“Uh, what? Um, guys? Minamida-san has four wives?” Shou's question was naturally met with a nod from everyone.

“But I've heard rumors that they're all political marriages or something.”

“Well, I heard that they had been going out as staff for quite a while. I'm sure they're just doing it for the sake of appearances. And I thought he had another partner, didn't he?”

“Alea ... ... louder ... ...”

“May I have everyone's attention, please? We're going to pretend that we don't know about Minamida-san's identity, so please be careful not to slip up, and Shou, please.”

“Oh, uh, yeah.” Apparently, the girls weren't going to reveal that to Minamida yet.

“Uh-huh. But it's kind of frustrating that we can't ask him directly, isn't it?”

“That's true, but ... The purpose is just to study for the exam. Dird, you should be especially careful. I'm afraid you might talk too easily.”

“Yes, I understand...” Shou and the others laughed lightly at Dird, whose mouth was agape.

Minamida's house was located at the end of the harbor pier. The front door was already open, and they could see Minamida inside. He greeted everyone.

“Hey guys, welcome. Feel free to come up.”

“Sorry to disturb you,” Shou and the others took off their shoes and went inside the house.

There, Palty took out a package from her bag and presented it to Minamida. “Minamida-san. I didn't have much time today ... ... This is the leftover of the one I baked yesterday ... ... If you'd like to try some, please do.”

“Cookies? Haha, thank you. You don't have to worry about this now, but ... ... we'll eat them together later.” Minamida then led me to a six-tatami mat Japanese room.

There was a large Japanese style table in the center of the room with a 20-inch TV and a stand to put it on, but no other furniture. It was a very neat and clean room.

“Can you wait here for me, please? The girls will be here soon.” Saying that, Minamida went down the stairs to the basement next to the back room.

“Oh, sorry to disturb you.” As Shou and the others walked into the Japanese room and sat down on the cushions, the Cabbits peeked out of a small window and hopped straight into the room.

“Miah!”

“Ah! It's the kitties! Hello!”

“Meow!”

Each of the Cabbits sat down in front of each of the girls, as Minamida would be watching Shou's studies.

“Good day to you.” A monitor plate with these words was displayed in front of each of the Cabbits.

“Nice to meet you!”

“Yes, yes, nice to meet you.”

“Best regards, ...”

“Nice to meet you, everyone.”

Seeing this, Dird and the others greeted the Cabbits. The Cabbits each responded with a “miaa” as well.

“Haha, looks like we're all set.” Minamida returned from the basement with a large pot, cups, and a plate with the cookies that Palty had brought.

“Come now. It must have been hot outside.” Minamida poured a pot of pale pink juice for all of them and passed it around.

“Bon appétit!”

Shou and the girls, who had walked under the blazing sun, drank half of it in one gulp. And then...

“... ... delicious!!!”

Minamida chuckled, “Haha. I'm glad you like it. There's plenty more where that came from, so don't hesitate to drink up.”

“I think I've had this flavor ... ... somewhere before, but I can't remember ... ...” Palty seemed to be frantically tracing a thread of memory, whereupon Minamida explained.

“Oh, it's the pressed fruit of Jurai. It's a rare thing that's not commonly available.”

“What?” Shou quickly replied.

“But isn't that really valuable? Are you sure it's okay for us to be drinking it like this?”

“Haha, it's fine. I have a friend who sends me a lot of stuff, so don't worry about it. Now, let's start studying for the exam.” Minamida made it sound as if it wasn't a big deal, but Shou and Palty were a little curious about what the thing was.

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“Tsu, I'm so tired ... ...” In the dusk, Shou and the girls were walking home from Minamida's house. Dird, the most exhausted of the group, mumbled to herself.

“Well, it was really tough, wasn't it? Well, I'm a good student, so I had no problem.”

“But ... ... was amazing. He was very good at teaching ... ...”

“That's true. I felt that M-san in particular was a top-notch teacher. Hmm, as for me, I would like to ask her to teach a class at school every day from now on.”

The four of them exchanged their impressions peacefully. Then the conversation turned to Shou.

“How was it Shou? Is Minamida a good teacher?”

“Yes, it was very easy to understand, and you teach based on your own experience, so it was easy to understand... I'm sorry Miron Sensei, but I think .....Minamida-san is a better teacher than you.” He laughed, and the girls laughed along with him.

“Miron is a genius in her own right, you know. I heard that geniuses can't understand what ordinary people can't understand. Isn't that it?”

“Besides, she's really fast-paced ... ...”

“Hmm. But then again, teaching is not Sensei's specialty.”

Shou and the others laughed again as Palty lightly followed up with Miron.

Then Dird said, as if suddenly struck by inspiration. “Ah! Hey, hey, guys, why don't we go visit Grandma Tomi right now? You know, if we go down this road, we can get to Grandma Tomi's store in no time!”

They all nodded in agreement with Dird's suggestion to just show up since it was already late. A little while later, they arrived in front of Tomi's store.

“Hmm, what's that?” Shou witnessed a strange scene there.

Tomi's store, which was supposed to be closed, was open, and many customers were crowding in. Shou and the others looked at each other, then looked into the store and saw that it was not Tomi sitting upstairs in the back, but Miron at the register, busy with customers.

“Oh, Shou-chan and the girls, did you come to visit me by any chance? Sorry about that.”

“Oh, Tomi-san, ..., huh? What, why Sensei?”

Miron noticed the presence of Shou and the girls and immediately shouted out. “You came to make a house call for Tomi-san and got caught in the middle of it! Come on! Don't just stand there, help us! Thanks to you, I can't see her well!”

Before Miron could say anything, Apuesta was quickly heading towards the cash register.

Shou understood what was going on but seeing how crowded the store was and how cramped the checkout area was, anyone other than Apuesta would just get in the way, so Shou agreed silently with Dird, Alea and Palty and decided to wait outside the store quietly.

Apuesta's handling of the customers was superb, and with her entry, the processing speed improved dramatically, and the customers who had come to shop for dinner were gone in no time.

“I'm sorry about today, guys. Thanks for coming, everyone. When my back heals, I'll thank you with some juice for lunch.” Tomi, who looked surprisingly healthy, saw Shou and the others off as they left the store. Shou and Miron soon parted ways with Dird and the girls. Shou was on his way home to prepare for tomorrow's exam. It was already dark outside, and the beautiful light of the moon was clearly visible.

“Ah, I'm tired ... ... But more importantly, Shou-kun, why were you in that place? Weren't you supposed to be studying at Dird's house today?”

“Oh, no, actually, today...”

“Well, I understand, but Minamida seems to be a good teacher, unlike me.”

“What? You knew about this?” Shou was confused by the sudden words, but Miron let out a “hmm” and continued.

“There's no other reason why Shou and his friends would be passing by that store at that time of day, on their way back from Minamida's house ... ...

“Oh ... ... I see ... ...”

“You don't need to worry about it. My father used to tell me that I was unfit to be a teacher ... ...”

“That's not true ... ...”

“That's okay. I don't know what it's like to be a student who has trouble learning, and I don't understand what it's like to not understand. So, I'm pretty sure I'm not suited to teach anyone.”

“I don't know, even a weakness like that sounds like a bit of a boast.”

“Hmph! Even I have my complexes. Probably every genius has one.”

“Is that so?”

“Geniuses and ordinary people are no different. Every human being understands things and situations by focusing on themselves. Both geniuses and ordinary people have their own ideals. It's only natural for people to have a complex when they compare their current self with that ideal. It's just a matter of whether the level of that ideal is high or low.”

“Oh ... ... I can kind of understand. But what is Sensei's complex? You're so beautiful, smart, and rich, that's just too high an ideal for me to understand.”

“.....” After a slight pause of thought. Miron gently averted her gaze and mumbled.
“.....What do you think of me as a woman ... ...?”

“Yeah .....” Shou stopped in surprise at the sudden remark, and Miron stopped as well, looking back.

“From Shou-kun's point of view ... ..., do you find me attractive as a woman? Hey, can you tell me honestly?”

“Well, um, ...” Shou did not know what Miron's intentions were and wondered how to respond. Then, he returned. “... ... Well, if you could just be a little more careful with your normal outbursts and behavior, ...”

“Does that make you want to jump on me?”

“That's why I'm telling you to be careful with that kind of language and behavior!”

“Huh. You're right.”

“Yes!” The smile that Miron showed at that moment was just too beautiful. Under the moonlight, Miron's pale skin and beautiful blond hair with a hint of blue, her well-defined face and jewel-like blue eyes, her collarbone stretching clearly from her supple neck, her breasts rising beautifully from the gentle slope and her deep cleavage, her figure was a mass of feminine

beauty.

Shou's heart skipped a beat. You want to jump on her? (Gugu..... makes me want to pounce!) Shou, who had fallen in love with her, honestly thought such a thing and fought against reason. Fortunately, he was able to suppress his impulses as Miron quickly turned and walked away, but if they had looked at each other a little longer, he might have hugged her.

“Well, now that we've heard DT Boy's valuable opinion, let's get home and have dinner.”

“DT is superfluous! Oh, I have a side dish that Tomi gave me earlier today, so it'll be easy.”

“Yes. I'll make dinner for you, so you can go study.”

“Huh? Then, please do so.”

“Huh. I have to do something like a teacher once in a while.” The back of Miron's head looked like she was in a good mood.

(I'm like ... ... living with such a beautiful person ... ... Oh no!) Shou quickly shook his head and ran after Miron, as a strange awareness almost intervened in the reality that he was living with Miron.

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The next day, the examinations at the school finally started.

Shou and the others worked hard to show the results of their study sessions.

As a result, ...

“Hey you guys! Tomorrow is summer vacation, but anyone with a “make-up” mark on their paper will have to come to school during the summer vacation. What a pain in the ass! Why didn't you guys get better scores? It's just more work for me to do during my vacation!”

It was the last homeroom of the semester. Miron grumbled at the podium and walked out of the classroom looking rather sluggish. It was an unbecoming comment from a teacher, but all the students in Shou's class were too busy worrying about test scores to care.

“Okay. I did it, I did it, ...!” Shou was now holding several test papers in his hands, expressing his joy. This was because he had scored well above average in all subjects, one of the highest scores he had ever achieved. Naturally, there was no “make-up” mark on the paper.

Shou was so happy when Alea appeared in front of him and peeked at Shou's test.

“Wow, Shou, you're doing pretty well. You're not as good as me, though.” Alea's test papers fluttered in front of her, all with scores over 90.

“Wow, that's amazing Alea.”

To Shou's surprise, Alea proudly said, “Well, yeah.”

Apuesta and Palty also came to Shou's side. “Shou....., how was it?”

“Hmm. From the looks of it, I guess it was okay.”

“Oh, Apuesta, Palty, yeah, I got a pretty good score. Thanks to everyone for that. Thank you.”

“No, we didn't do anything, it's because of Shou's hard work.”

“Yeah, I guess so? Oh, you two got good scores too, right?”

At Shou's question, Apuesta and Palty looked at each other and nodded.

“Yes, Apuesta and I both received reasonable scores. The only remaining thing is ... ...”

And finally, all eyes turned to...

“……” She was propped up on her desk and wouldn't wake up - Dird.

“Hey ... ... Dird, you can't be ... ...” Fearfully, Alea walked over to her.

Then Dird got up with a bang. “Oooohhhh! What should I do Alea, ah! I got red marks in almost everything! Almost everything has a make-up mark! Ugh! I don't know what to do. You taught me so much, and now I got this score! And Mike helped me to understand a few things. Oh, my God, you got me so excited. I don't know why I got it wrong from the very first question! This is the part that Cabbit pointed out to me over and over again! Ooohhhh I'm so sorry! Everyone help me, please!”

“Oh, stop crying, shut up! I can't help it. I'll teach you one thing at a time, so just sit there! Come on!”

“……” Dird, who started crying, and Alea, who was like a demon instructor who would review every single problem she got wrong and get angry.

“Oh dear ....., it looks like we won't be able to settle down for the summer vacation.” Shou and Apuesta laughed at Palty's mumbling at the same time.

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Despite the little incident of Dird's massive red dot festival, Shou and the girls were able to have a good summer vacation.

Dird and the girls had gone back to their respective homes because of the test, and Shou had gone home alone and was now picking shells on the beach a short distance from his tent.

“Summer vacation, huh ... ... I've been living on this island since before summer vacation, so I feel like I'm on summer vacation at a resort every day. Shou laughed at such a strange feeling, and although he had become somewhat accustomed to it, it still seemed strange that he was

living a life of survival on such a beautiful southern island. It was at this time that he suddenly remembered the summers when he was living on the mainland. (Come to think of it, I used to go on trips with Himeko every summer ... ...)

If that were all, it would have sounded like a real-life experience, but the reality was different. Shou, along with Takeshi, Masaru, and Suguru, had been able to go on vacation with Himeko, but they hadn't been able to do much sightseeing. They were forced to do a lot of menial work for Himeko, such as carrying her luggage and taking her places. Thanks to this, he was so tired that he fell asleep at night and rarely felt like he was on vacation.

It was such a sad memory, but it was also an important memory for Shou. (Himeko-chan and the others will probably go somewhere this year, too ...) While checking the shells he collected, he was thinking about such things.

"... ... Hmm?" Shou noticed that a ship he had never seen before was coming towards him from the sea.

"That can't be ... ... Miron Sensei's new cruiser ... ..., can it? I'm pretty sure they said it would take a long time to build ... ... And it's kind of small ... ..." Shou stood up and squinted at it. The cruiser comes closer and closer to the island.

As the cruiser neared the island, it dropped its speed and stopped, and a large rubber boat was dropped from the cruiser into the sea. When Shou saw the figure from the cruiser getting into the rubber boat ...

"Eh ... ..., no way!" He threw out the shellfish he had been collecting and ran off at full speed.

Episode 3 - Visitors to Paradise

“Hmm? The sound of a ship?” Miron, who was writing a report as a watcher in the cruiser, stopped her hand when she noticed the sound. Just as she was about to stand up, the door to the room suddenly opened with a bang.

“!!!” Miron couldn't believe her eyes.

“Hey ... I've missed you, Miron.” The smiling woman, waved at her with a fluttering hand, threw off her dirty hat, took off her camouflage, and revealed her figure. Her flowing, beautiful golden hair ..... her face ..... her figure ..... her bearing.

Miron felt as if she were looking in a mirror.

“Well, that's surprising, isn't it? Now then, where shall we start with the explanation?”

The woman's voice brought a small gasp from Miron.

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Shou couldn't believe his eyes, but what came ashore on the island in a rubber boat - was a childhood friend he hadn't seen in a very long time.

“Hi, Himeko, are you ... ...? And you guys are also ... ...” Yes, in front of Shou, there were four people that he would never forget.

They were Himeko, Takeshi, Masuru, and Suguru.

“.....Shou-kun? You are Shou-kun ....., right?” Himeko, who still looked like a beautiful young lady, stared at Shou as if she was somewhat stunned.

“Is it really you, Shou? You've changed a lot, haven't you .....?” Takeshi said the same thing. Masuru and Suguru were also silently dumbfounded.

Shou then realized that he had cut his hair and that his skin was getting tanned, so he returned.

“Oh, yeah. Actually, I cut my hair pretty short. And it's hot here, so I'm getting tanned easily. ..... But more importantly, why are you all here?”

Himeko, who had regained her composure, replied. “Of course, we're on vacation this summer. We're also here to see how Shou-kun's life is going.”

“Oh, I didn't know that. .....”

“Well, I'm tired from the long trip. ..... Where is Shou-kun's house? Is that? It's a very stylish house for Shou-kun. I'm surprised.” Himeko let Takeshi and the others take all her stuff and walked alone and empty-handed past Shou to Miron's cruiser house.

“Oh, wait, Himeko-chan! That's not my house.”

“? Then where is your house?”

“It's over there.” Shou pointed to a tent near the beach.

“... ... Hmm, Shou-kun, your jokes have gotten better after not seeing you for a while.” Himeko laughed, comparing the cruiser house to the tent.

It wasn't a joke, but Shou had a hard time saying .....

“Hey Shou, I don't care what you think, but we're tired.”

“Yeah, yeah. I'm sorry, but I'm going to have to interrupt you.”

“Oh, Masaru! Suguru! No, it's dangerous!” The two men, who had always been arrogant, walked up the stairs of the cruiser house on their own, as if Shou's things were theirs.

“No, that's ...! That's not my house...!”

Without listening to Shou's warning, the two friends strolled into the cruiser house.

A little while later. From inside came the sound of loud blows and two pitiful screams.

“Oh, ..., I knew it.” Honestly, Shou thought, I feel like putting up a sign that says “Beware of the fierce animals”.

“What the hell?”

He tried to run up the stairs after them, but was crushed by Masuru and Suguru's bodies, and they all fell to the ground.

“Guh ... ..., what the hell is ... ...?”

Takeshi was amazed at Masuru and Suguru's bruised and contorted bodies, and then at the person who appeared at the top of the stairs.

“Freeze! Don't move!”

“!!!”

The person who shouted and pointed a gun at Takeshi and the others from the top of the cruiser was of course the owner of this cruiser, Miron.

The person who did this to Masuru and Suguru was an unexpectedly beautiful woman. Takeshi forgot to blink and looked at Miron.

“Wait a minute. What the hell is going on? Don't just look down at me, will you please explain?” It was Himeko who interrupted her.

Instead of being afraid of Miron, she looked up at her with an arrogant attitude.

When Miron saw Himeko, she looked at her with a questioning look on her face. “I've never seen you before, have I? You're not from this island, are you?”

“I'm the one who's asking the questions. Stop looking down at me and come down here.”

Shou's eyes met Miron's, and he looked apologetically limp, so Miron gave him an approving look, lowered her gun, and jumped easily out of the cruiser.

“I see. You're Shou-kun's childhood friend, aren't you?”

Miron glanced at Himeko, who replied in a bad mood.

“That's not the point, you have to answer my question. Who are you? What is your relationship with Shou-kun? What have you two done to each other?”

However, Miron ignored Himeko's words and spoke to Shou. “Hey Shou-kun, what's going on? Why are they here?”

“Ah ... ... that's ... ...”

“Hey you! Are you deaf! I'm telling you to answer my question!”

“Shadap! You're the one who needs to explain, girl.” Miron brushed off Himeko's frustration with just her voice, and Shou groaned in annoyance as Himeko fell silent.

Just then, Minamida came running in, looking furious.

Minamida's appearance calmed the ruckus, and Shou and the others decided to have a discussion in front of Shou's tent, where Shou and the others were seated, while Himeko sat on a simple assembly chair that Takeshi had prepared.

Minamida, who was standing alone, spoke. “I'm sorry, but this is a privately owned island. It's not a place where outsiders like you can enter without permission. What the hell do you think you're doing, ignoring our communications, and coming ashore? Depending on your reply, you may be in big trouble.”

Minamida's slightly threatening tone made Himeko and the others look nervous. Then Himeko replied on their behalf.

“We had a communications failure. Besides, we're friends of Shou-kun's here. We don't need permission to come and see him.”

“This was a malfunction ... ...?”

“Well, she's just like ... ... reported.”

Both Minamida and Miron couldn't help but laugh at Himeko's outrageous rebuttal.

“For that matter, what kind of a person is that person? She suddenly attacked two of my friends

and even pulled a gun on me like that.” Himeko glared sharply at Miron, but Miron merely looked cool.

“Yeah, she's a teacher and the doctor on this island, and she has diplomatic immunity. So, she's allowed to carry a gun. Plus, given the circumstances, you're trespassers. I think you should be grateful for her decision to let you get away with a little scare.”

“Jeez, you've got to be kidding me! We don't know anything about that!”

“Yes, you do! I'm not going to thank her for hitting me out of the blue!”

“No matter how much of a child you are, there are some things you just can't ignore. And as I'm sure you know; your actions are somewhat immoral.” At Minamida's words, Masusu and Suguru both fell silent. It seemed that they were aware of this.

“It's ... ..., and it's wrong that Shou didn't explain it properly!”

“That's right, Shou, you sent us to a dangerous place like that!”

“I told you it wasn't my house, and I told you it was dangerous, didn't I? So, it's your fault for ignoring my words and going in there without permission.”

“!”

Shou had never been one to talk back, and his casual remark seemed to surprise Himeko and the others.

“Uh, anyway, where's the ship you guys came in on?”

Himeko replied to Minamida's question in a resentful manner. “We've already sent it to the next island. All that's left is a rubber boat.”

“Then call them back immediately. And I'll ask you to leave immediately.”

“I told you the communications equipment is out of order. And the ship needs refueling and maintenance, so we can't move right away.” Himeko argued, her face still showing that she thought she could just say that and not have to leave.

Minamida sighs and says, “Huh. All right. I'll wait until the refueling and maintenance are done, but I'll take you guys to my ship. Now get ready.”

“Hey, wait a minute. It's been a long boat ride and I'm exhausted! If you force me to do something like that and something happens to me, my family will sue!”

“You'll only get yourself arrested if you do that.”

“What?”

“If your ship is also found to have landed people here without permission, the crew will be

detained as soon as they reach the other side of the island. You'd better stop stating your opinions so forcefully."

"Wait." Takeshi, who had been silent until then, stepped forward to defend Himeko. "I understand where you're coming from. It's true that we're at fault. But isn't it unusual, no matter what? Are you sure this is Japan?"

At Takeshi's words, Minamida nodded, "Yes. This island is under joint resource development with other countries. There's a lot going on. So, if you could help me understand why she's here, with her diplomatic immunity ... ... Anyway, you need to leave this island immediately..."

"Wait. Minamida, you don't have to be so hasty. You see, they've come to see Shou Kun, and they're probably tired from their long trip, so why don't you let them stay for a few days?"

"Sensei!"?" Miss Miron!" Shou and Minamida were startled by Miron's sudden statement in their defense, and Himeko and the others were stunned by their sudden ally.

"Look, I'm renting Shou's land, and I don't want him to get into trouble with his friends here, so there's no problem for a few days, right?"

"Yes, but ....." Both Shou and Minamida knew that Miron meant what she said. It was true that there was still plenty of time before the day of the battle, and there would be no problem if they stayed for a few days.

"I'll take full responsibility for these kids. Right? That's fine then, Minamida."

"Uh, no ... ..." But Minamida, who still looked unsure, glanced at Shou.

(.....I'm sure you're asking if I can be responsible for this, too. .....)

Minamida's intentions were clear to Shou, who gave a small nod with a sigh. Minamida seemed to have finally come to a decision.

"If you're going to go that far, ... I understand."

It must have been painful for Minamida to turn Shou's friend away so recklessly. When Minamida finally broke down, Himeko and the others brightened up.

"However, there are many places on this island that are off-limits even to islanders, so be careful not to get into trouble like you did at the cruiser house earlier. Also, I'll leave the baggage inspection to Miss Miron. I'll take care of the island entry procedures."

"Yes, understood. Is that all right with you? Miss Himeko?" Miron smiled, and Himeko replied with a slightly miffed, "Yes."

"Then show me to my hotel. Or is it a fancy inn?"

Shou replied a little awkwardly to Himeko's suggestion.

“Uh, ...Himeko-chan. Sorry. We don't have that kind of accommodation on this island.”

“Huh. What, Shou-kun, you're making funny jokes again. No matter how much it's being developed, how can there be a place in Japan without accommodations?”

“Uh, ... that .....”

Himeko, Takeshi, Masuru, and Suguru gradually turned pale, as if they had sensed by Shou's reaction that he was not willing to speak.

Shou looked at Miron and Minamida as if to sigh.

“Well, I'm going to go now, but if you feel like leaving, you can always call out to me.” Minamida chuckled and left, leaving Himeko and the others stunned and watching in silence.

“It's okay, Shou-kun. They've come all this way. It's okay. I'll let you guys enjoy this island as much as you can...”

As Himeko and the others lightly stepped aside, Shou pondered, “What's going to happen to ..... now?

Then Miron took a glance at the cruiser and laughed in a small voice.

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“Sensei~! Shou~! I've brought it, oh ～～～～!”

“Damn it, why did you call me out of the blue? Hmm? Are those the guys?”

“Shou's ... ... friend ... ...?”

“They're from the mainland, aren't they?”

“Oh, I can feel the aura of a lady in that girl, she's a different type from Palty ... ... It's really good! I'm tickled!”

“Mike, I don't think it's a good idea for you to suddenly give me that sneaky look.”

A short time later, Dird and the girls came running up to Shou and the others with their big bags; Miron had called them, and behind them were Mike and Ichiro.

“Oh ... ... the beautiful girls of the tropics ... ...!”

“Hey Shou? Do you know those girls!”

Masuru and Suguru, who had been complaining a lot earlier, turned their attention to Dird and the others and got excited. They, as well as Mike, were really easy to understand boys.

“Oh, yeah, they're classmates. We only have one class at school, though.”

“Hey, you can introduce us later, right?”

“Please do, Shou!”

“Haha ... ... well, if you can afford it ... ...”

While they were doing this, Himeko was squirming and looking uncomfortable. Takeshi, who was standing next to her, seemed to notice immediately and asked Shou.

“Shou, where's the bathroom?”

“Toilet? Then there's ... ...”

Sensing that it was Himeko who wanted to use the bathroom, Shou whispered to Miron. “Sensei, can I use your bathroom? I mean, Himeko-chan is at ... ...”

“Oh really? I'm sorry, but the toilet in my cruiser is out of order. And in order to enjoy this island, you'll definitely have to use Shou-kun's bathroom, right?”

“Ha, ha, ha ... ... Well, yes, yes ... ...” (I guess this woman is really going to screw with Himeko and the others.) Shou gave up after seeing Miron's happy face, and his shoulders slumped with disappointment.

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Miron, Dird and the other female members then led Himeko to the bathroom.

“Na, na, na ... ...” Himeko blushed as she saw the rocky toilet overhanging the sea. “Wha, are you mocking me? What's with this toilet!”

Dird didn't understand why Himeko was so angry, Alea mumbled, “What a pain in the ass. Apuesta was confused all the way through, and Palty was smiling.

“It's a private room, you won't hear a sound from the waves, and it comes with a washing machine. There's nothing wrong with that, is there? And when you're done, you can use the sea sponges we have on hand, and you won't have any problems.”

“Ugh, ugh .....!”

“Hey. If you don't want to use this toilet, you can do it in the jungle, or oh! I recommend taking a dip in the ocean. It's nice and cold.”

“Na, na, na, ...!?” Himeko turned even redder at such a wild statement from Dird, though she probably said it with good intentions and kindness.

“Oh ... ..., you want to get rid of me that badly?” Perhaps it was because of Dird and her friends' good looks and the humiliation of having to put up with their squirming, but as expected Himeko took a more mature tone and glared at Dird and the girls. However, they remained calm and unconcerned.

“That's not true! We used it all the time until we had a house, so I wanted you, Shou's friend, to have fun too.”

“What ... ...? You're kidding, right ... ...?” Himeko was appalled by Dird's innocent words, she looked at the faces of the other girls, but none of them seemed to be in on the joke. Most importantly, Himeko didn't think the girl named Dird was lying.

“I'm not joking~? Why don't you ask Shou if you want? Shou also used to do it in the ocean when he first came to the island. Hey ～～～～Shou～～～～!”

“Stop it!” Himeko blocked Dird's mouth as she tried to call out for Shou loudly.

Finally, the urge to pee must have gotten the best of her, because Himeko let go of her pride and shouted. “I'm done here! You guys go away too!”

Dird cocked her head as Himeko ran into the bathroom, Miron and Alea grinned, and Apuesta and Palty chuckled tiredly at each other.

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An hour later, a large tent for Takeshi and the boys and the tent for Himeko were completed.

In front of them, Himeko clenched her fists again, and trembled uncontrollably. “Why do I have to stay in this shabby place! You said you were Miron, right? I'll pay you whatever you want. So, I was wondering if I could rent your cruiser house?”

“The fact that I have diplomatic immunity means that the cruiser house is the same as a foreign country. Does Himeko have a passport and access permission?”

When Miron said this in a dismissive tone, Himeko became angry and called Takeshi.

“Takeshi, you need to get your passport and apply for a permit right away!”

“Alright? But it takes about a month to apply for a permit through the Japanese Foreign Ministry. But I won't give you a permit because then you won't be able to enjoy the best part of the island, right?”

She had no intention of lending it from the beginning. Himeko's face only reddened as Miron gave her an extremely evil smile.

“Stick it ....., that's enough!” Himeko took it for granted and went into the large tent they had made for the boys.

“... ... Ah, I knew it.” Dird and the others, who had already figured out Himeko's personality by then, muttered in unison.

“Hey, there's nothing in there. I'm not saying there should be furniture, but there should at least be a bed. Otherwise, I won't be able to sleep properly.”

Dird replied to Himeko, who immediately jumped out of the tent and vented her frustration.

“Haha. I don't have a bed. And Himeko-chan's tent is over there.”

“What about ... ...?”

Dird pointed to the small tent she had built for Himeko.

“... ... You want me to sleep in a small place like that?”

“But it's fun to sleep in a tent...”

“How much are you going to humiliate me .....!”

Mike looked at Himeko, who was getting a little teary-eyed, with a curious look on his face. “Oh, Shou, that's quite a dominatrix you have there. I'm getting the chills again.”

“Please don't be weird about it, ... Mike.”

“Haha, I know, I know. You've come all this way to be my guest, and I have to treat you with respect, right?

Okay, Himeko-chan. We'll make you an improvised bed out of hay, then. Will that satisfy you for the time being?”

“... ... hay?”

“Yes, Shou, and Shou's friends, you can help me too.”

“Uh-huh.” “Okay. Hey, you guys, come on.”

So Shou and his friends started to make a quick bed using the hay they had cut when they were remodeling Miron's cruiser house.

Palty turned to her friends and said, “Well then, shall we get ready for lunch, Himeko-san, is there anything you can't eat?”

Himeko's face brightened a little, but she didn't answer the question, instead she replied.

“Lunch? What the hell kind of restaurant is that? I'd rather have Chinese.”

“Hey, do you think there's a restaurant on an island with no accommodations?”

Himeko asked, annoyed at Alea's sluggish comment. “Then what the hell is there to eat on this island?”

Dird answered thoughtfully, “Let's see... “Rice, right? Fish, shellfish, miso soup with seaweed, vegetables, and stewed vegetables?”

“.....” Himeko's expression grew grim, and Apuesta and Palty began to panic.

“Oh! And fresh sashimi! Hey, do you like sashimi, Himeko-chan? We have wasabi, too!” Dird asked as she peered into Himeko's face.

“Huh? Eh, yeah, I like it.”

Apuesta and Palty let out a sigh of relief.

“Alright! Then I'm going to go catch some fish! Oh, and since we're here, why don't we have Shou join us? Hey, hey, Shou~!”

“Huh? What's Dird doing?”

Dird went over to Shou, who was making a bed for Himeko, told him why and brought him over. Then Dird and Shou each got a snorkel and a harpoon and ran into the ocean.

Dird jumped into the water and immediately caught a fish. Himeko seemed honestly surprised by her brilliant harpooning skills. Shou, however, seemed to be having a hard time catching one.

“... ... Hey, Shou-kun, do you usually do that kind of thing?” Himeko asked, to which Alea and the others replied to each other.

“Hmm? Yeah, I guess. But Shou's still a terrible harpooner.”

“But he's a lot better than he was before ... ... Look, I think he caught one.”

“Hmm, yes, it's fun to watch Shou grow.”

“.....So.”

Himeko listened to the story with a somewhat distant look in her eyes.

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Miron had been watching Shou and Dird work, and when she saw that everyone was working, she went inside the cruiser house.

Locking the door behind her, she headed straight for the bedroom at the far end. As she entered, she muttered. “Oh dear, this is a complete mess.”

“Oh, I'm sorry I was in the middle of a conversation, okay?”

Hearing these words, she emerged from the shadows of the bed...

“... ... That's brilliant. I'm a little shocked ... ... that no one seemed to notice.”

Oh my god... it was Miron.

There were now two Miron's in that room. The two of them had the exact same face, figure, and voice; the way they brushed their hair, their tone of voice, and their behavioral habits were all the same.

“The Central Intelligence Agency seems to have a lot of free time on their hands. Isn't it a waste of taxpayers' money?”

“Oh, I'd like to compliment you on that. Even your family didn't notice it, remember?”

“Hmph. But of course, you're going to undo that surgery, aren't you?”

It was Miron, the one who had come out from behind the bed, who said that.

When asked, Miron smiled and nodded, “Yes. Don't worry. I won't bother the real you as long as the 'mission' is completed safely.”

That was an admission that she was an imposter.

The real Miron crossed his arms and asked. “You said that you were on ... ... that nuclear submarine, and that you used it as bait to get here, right? But I don't know how you could have illegally entered this island.”

“It wasn't that simple, you know? I've been hiding in plain sight ... ... and today I finally got to meet you. You're a smart girl, so you already know what's going on, don't you?”

“Well, as people born in the same country, I understand. Anyway, what are your plans for the future?”

“I'm going to a designated location now to deliver the information to my collaborators. We'll be hiding out there for a while. I'm sure it'll be easier to get out, but we don't want to raise too many red flags.”

“Yeah. From now on, it'd be great if you could make an appointment with a picture of yourself beforehand.”

“I'm sorry. I'm sorry, but you know that we have to be very careful about what we do. Now, I'm going to go now. I'll be there in about an hour, so I'm going to ask you to stay on the ship until then and try to time it right.”

When the fake Miron turned around, the real Miron said, “Wait. One last thing. What did you have in mind to pay for the technology?”

“Oh. What the hell do you think it is?”

“Well, I can guess most of it. I'm sure you can't make absolute guarantees about your right to a seat on Earth ... ...”

To Miron's serious expression, fake Miron calmly replied.

“──Hmm. I think the answer is as you think, though?”

“It's still pool money, isn't it? Good grief, ..., you're so selfish. It's the common property of the entire planet, you know?”

“Hmm. If we can just get the information from the collaborators, we win. If we do that, no matter what the other countries say, the balance of power will be tilted overwhelmingly in our favor. It might not even be a dream to unite the world.”

“Oh my, you're like a child planning a prank. It's not like we're dealing with some dumb thief.”

“You're talking about something else, aren't you?”

“Because I'm a representative of Earth, after all.”

The fake Miron chuckled. “Oh, that's right. ─ Oh, yes, it's not really a thank you ... ... for everything you've done for me, but I have one last gift for you.”

“Hm?”

The fake Miron tossed a small package with a pop and the real Miron caught it.

“I don't think we'll be seeing each other again, but ... ... take care.” With a wink, the fake Miron waved backwards and walked out of the bedroom.

“What the hell is this?” Left alone, Miron ripped open the package and “... ... shhhhhhhh!”

A book came out of the package, titled “How to Love”, and she immediately threw it at the wall. It seemed to be a sarcastic reference to Miron's problems with approaching Minamida. “What a joke! What a joke .....n?” But then she happened to open a page of a book, and Miron couldn't help but crouch down and start perusing it. The page was that of a section called How to Love a Younger Man.

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“Oh? Miron Sensei? Are you going out somewhere? Lunch will be ready soon.”

Palty noticed Miron coming out of the ship and called out to her, not realizing that it was the fake Miron.

“I have some business to attend to. Can you leave the rice, yes, and the side dishes?”

“Yes, of course.”

“See you later.”

Palty smiled as she watched the fake Miron leave with a wave of her hand.

At that exact moment, Shou and Dird came back from the sea.

Not only Alea and the girls who had been preparing the food, but also Mike and the rest of the guys who had already finished making the beds, all looked at the catch they had made.

“Oh, you caught quite a lot!”

“Good job, Shou.”

“Haha, thanks Alea, Apuesta, I don't know how much everyone will eat, but ... ... I think we can get by with this much for now.”

“If it's not enough, let's go get some more, Shou!”

“Hmm, thank you both Shou and Dird for your hard work. I'll take care of the rest, so Shou can take a break and talk to his friends. Dird, please sashimi these five fish first, then Alea and Apuesta will be in the pot over there.”

After receiving the fish, Palty gave a quick order and got Dird and the others moving. Shou wiped himself off with a towel and sat down to rest as he was told.

Himeko, Takeshi, Masuru and Suguru looked on in amazement as they stared at the remaining fresh fish.

Shou watched them with a wry smile, and then Takeshi stood up, came over to Shou, and sat down next to him.

“Did Shou catch that? I'm surprised. You're a handy guy.”

“Haha, if you do it enough times every day, you'll learn to do it naturally. Besides, if you don't, you won't be able to eat enough food. It's a matter of life and death.”

Shou said with a laugh, to which Takeshi replied with a slight smile.

“I see, so you must be desperate.”

Then Takeshi looked around the ..... jungle, the sea, the sky, and all of the island with great interest at this place where Shou lived and said, “I was surprised when I heard that you were living in a tent here ... ... it was true.”

“Haha. Well, there are some circumstances. I'm just wondering why you came to this island again, Takeshi. You didn't really come here to see me, did you?”

When he asked, Takeshi glanced at Himeko and whispered. “She's always been a bit fickle, hasn't she?”

“That's true, but ... ... if you were going on vacation, there had to be someplace more decent, right? What's the point of coming to a place like this where there's no lodging or restaurants .....?”

“Well, there's a lot going on over here. But Shou, isn't it crazy that we don't even have a place to

stay for a few people? There were a few houses at the port, but ... ...”

Without revealing any details, Takeshi changed the subject, and Shou replied with some doubt.

“Yeah, that place is full of people involved in the development of undersea resources. It seems that they have a lot of top-secret documents and stuff, so they don't allow outsiders to stay there. If it wasn't for that, I wouldn't be living in a tent here, I'd be living there.”

“Ha, I guess that's true.” Takeshi seemed a little more convinced, whereupon he showed a slight hint of annoyance and said, “But the undersea resources or ... ... is there any reason to keep it a secret to that extent?”

“Hmmm. I'm not sure about that either, but I've heard that it's the special technology for drilling and such that they want to keep secret ... ... And thanks to that kind of mess, they're not going to make this island a public tourist attraction just yet.”

“I see. I understand the situation a little better now.”

“Oh, but it looks like there are some decent accommodations on the next island, so if Himeko-chan is feeling overwhelmed, you can always tell Minamida-san. I'm sure he'll send a boat right away.”

“Yeah, that Minamida guy seemed to want us to leave as soon as possible.”

“Oh yeah, Minamida-san is the administrator of this island ... ... And the owner of this island seems to be a very difficult person, so Minamida-san is in a lot of trouble.”

“Difficult person, huh, like Himeko? Then I can sympathize a little.”

“Haha, I guess you could say that.” (Considering the island's situation, it's not surprising that ... ... would react that way ... ...)

As Takeshi said, Shou felt sorry for Minamida, but of course he couldn't tell him why.

“As Minamida-san said earlier, this island is a little bit special, so you shouldn't wander about without permission. There are no signs or fences around the off-limits areas, and the islanders know all the faces of the islanders, so it's easy to recognize strangers when they arrive.”

Shou said, hoping to get Masuru and Suguru under control, and Takeshi nodded quickly.

“So, you want us to follow the rules. All right, I'll follow the rules. I'm not going to be happy if someone pulls a gun on me again.”

“That's a pretty special case, though. But I don't think there's anything wrong with a short stroll, and I'm sure you can get pretty far along the beach.”

“I see. I can see the beautiful ocean, and it would be nice to have Himeko take a walk with me.”

“Yeah, I guess so.”

When their conversation had settled down there.

“Shou~! Lunch is ready, ～～～～!”

At the sound of Dird's voice, they headed over to the others.

“What's with all the fish?”

“Hey Shou, is this all you have?” During the meal, Masuru and Suguru poked Shou in a whisper.

“Himeko-san, ..., um, how does it taste?” Palty, perhaps noticing Masuru and Suguru's dissatisfied look, called out to Himeko with a bit of concern.

“──Yes, it's delicious. At first, I was wondering what kind of amateur food I would be fed, but ... ... you are a good cook.”

“Hmm, thank you. I'm glad you like it.”

Masuru and Suguru, who hadn't even eaten yet, immediately reached for the food when they saw Himeko eating the fish, looking a little surprised.

Then Palty smiled at Shou. When Shou saw Masuru and Suguru tucking into their dishes one after another, he bowed to Palty with a wry smile.

“Shou, excuse me, but could you please go to Tomi's store and pick up a few ingredients?” Palty asked, offering Shou a small note along with some money.

Shou took it immediately. “Yeah, sure. But if it's money, I'll...”

“No, because this is a matter of pride for me. I want to prove that even on this island we can serve food as good as on the mainland. However, the abundance of ingredients can't even compete with the mainland, but ... ... we'll cover that with our skills.”

“Haha, okay, Palty, thanks.” Nodding to the motivated Palty, Shou shoved the note and money into his pocket and took out one of the backpacks from the luggage tent to use for shopping.

“──Hmm? Shou, where are you going?” Takeshi saw this and asked Shou.

“Oh, I'm going to a store on the island run by a lady named Tomi.”

“A store? Then I'll go with you. I don't know what kind of stuff they have, but I'm sure they have snacks and juice. I want to buy a few things for Himeko.”

“I do, but ... ...Takeshi, do you have any cash?”

“Hmm? You don't take credit cards?”

With that, Takeshi briskly pulled out a card from his breast pocket, but there was no way there was any place on this island that accepted cards.

“Haha, no problem. I've got some spare cash on hand, so I'll get it for you.”

“Well, it's been a while since I've owed Shou anything.”

They started walking towards Tomi's store. “Where are you going, Takeshi-san?”

It was Masuru and Suguru who were lying down in the shade of a tree. When they got up, Takeshi said to them.

“We're going for a walk. You guys stay with Himeko.”

“Got it.” They made sure that Takeshi had looked from them and laid down sluggishly again.

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After seeing Shou and Takeshi off for a walk, Masuru and Suguru lay slack-jawed for a while.

“Oh, I'm so bored.”

“Do you want to go for a swim?”

“It's hot and I'm lazy. More importantly, you said they were Shou's classmates or something, right?”

“Yeah, I was surprised. They looked like gravure idols, man.”

“Yeah ... ... Hmm?” Masuru realized then that Dird and Palty were the only two people left in the place.

“What? When did those girls become the only ones here?”

“Hey, two against two is just fine. All right, I'll go talk to the girl who looks a little silly, and you go over there and-”

“Hey, that's me too! That kind of energetic girl is my favorite!”

While this silly exchange was going on, Dird was discussing something with Palty, then grabbed her basket and was about to go somewhere.

Masuru and Suguru looked at each other and stood up with a grin on their faces.

“Hey, girlfriend.”

“Hey, where are you going?” Masuru and Suguru called out together to Dird as they headed towards the jungle.

“Hmm? Well, I'm going to get some fruits for dinner.”

“Oh, okay, we'll help you.”

“Yeah, sure. We were bored anyway.”

“Thanks. But I don't mind going by myself.”

“Well, let's go together!”

“Yeah, don't be shy!”

The two walked up to flank Dird, who looked a little distressed and then laughed.

“Hmm, I guess I'll ask you to help me then~?”

The two of them smiled unpleasantly at Dird's words. However, they didn't realize that Dird's expression changed to that of a pirate at that moment.

From then on, Dird was in the lead, and Masuru and Suguru were following her through the jungle. The humid breeze and smells were unique, and the air was a bit different from the beach.

“Are you two okay~? There are snakes and trees up there, so be careful~?”

“Yeah, we're fine!”

“No problem!”

Masuru and Suguru kept looking at Dird with warm eyes as they walked deeper and deeper into the jungle.

Eventually, they looked at each other and nodded.

“Hey. We should probably get going.”

“Yeah. We'll take a slow approach where no one's coming ... ...” He mumbled.

“..... Huh?”

Right in front of the two of them, Dird's figure suddenly disappeared as if she was blending into the darkness.

“Eh, wait, what?”

“Oh, hey! Dird-chan?”

But their voices were only swallowed by the jungle. There was no reply.

“Hey ... ... if you leave us in a place like this ... ...”

“I don't remember the way! We'll never make it home!”

The two of them immediately started to panic. They seemed to have finally realized the seriousness of their situation. But when they ran to the place where Dird seemed to have disappeared, they found nothing there. The two became even more agitated.

“Oh, hey, Dird-chan!”

“Come on, let's not play hide-and-seek! I'll play with you later!”

In the dimly lit jungle as far as the eye could see, the two of them grew more and more nervous.

And then...

“Grrrrrrr ... ...” Out of nowhere, they heard what sounded like the growl of a beast.

“! Hey, hey! There's something weird going on right now!”

“Yo, come on! You're scaring me! There's no way I can hear that...

“Grrrrrrrrrrr!”

“Oh, no! There's still something here!

“Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa!”

The two quickly ran away. A high-pitched roar from behind them made them run faster. The two of them forgot themselves and just ran away pathetically.

“Hiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiii!”

“Da, someone help me, eeee!”

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“Hmm. I wasn't expecting much when I heard it was a remote island that wasn't touristy, but I guess there's a lot more stuff here than I thought.” Takeshi walked out of Tomi's store, carrying the large basket he had borrowed from her.

Shou, who had been outside earlier, gave a small smile and said, “Well, it's an island with a good amount of people living there.”

“I see. But Shou, is it okay if I don't carry some of that luggage?” Takeshi said, looking at Shou's large backpack, which was filled to the brim with stuff that even Takeshi, who was bigger than Masuru and Suguru, would have a hard time carrying on his own. Shou, on the other hand, was

carrying a basket of food in one hand.

Takeshi must have sensed this, but Shou replied with an unconcerned look on his face. “Oh, thanks. But I'm fine with this.”

“... ... Okay, then, rock-paper-scissors.”

“Huh?” Shou was appalled at the sudden offer, but Takeshi started the rock-paper-scissors game.

“If I lose, you'll have to let me carry your stuff. Rock-paper-scissors ... ... shoot.”

Shou hurriedly made a paper in response to the shoot, but as it turned out, Takeshi had made a rock.

“I guess I lost. I'll take that basket.” He only took Shou's basket, and they started walking.

“Ah, thanks for the ... ..., Takeshi.”

“Don't worry about it. You're doing all the heavy lifting, let's just get back. Himeko might get angry with them. I don't want that.”

Shou chuckled at Takeshi.

“But it's really okay. It's a lot easier than carrying a sleeping Miron Sensei on my back.”

“Sensei, you mean ... ... that blonde woman? Hey Shou, what ... ... do you mean by?”

“Oh, no, no, no! She has a habit of falling asleep all over the island. Since she lives near my house, sometimes I have to go and collect her. ... ... Haha.”

“Strange, isn't it? Why is she living near Shou's tent in the first place? And why is she living in a cruiser? ... ... There's plenty of land, isn't there?”

“Uh ... ... well, there was a little accident and the cruiser that Sensei was living in ran into my property. And it looks like they can't put it back in the ocean, so they just left it there ... ...”

“... ... What the hell kind of accident would cause a ship that big to crash into ... ...?”

“Haha, she's insane in many ways.”

Takeshi couldn't help but burst out laughing at Shou's rather unconcerned demeanor.

“Huh, hahaha. You've changed a lot ... ..., no, it's like you're back to your old self.”

“Huh? The old days?”

“Yeah, back when Himeko, me and you were playing together.”

When he was told that, Shou remembered those days when the three of them were still innocent

and young. It was true that Shou didn't pay as much attention to Himeko as he did now, and he was equal to Takeshi. It didn't matter what their parents' positions were, they could just be themselves.

“A lot has changed about your parents since then, but ... ... I'm still a little worried about you, and I'm sure Himeko feels the same way.”

“Takeshi ... ..., yes, thank you.” Shou thanked him honestly. At his words, Takeshi gave a slightly sad smile.

“Well, the part about being strong at rock-paper-scissors hasn't changed. You're just you, Shou.”

“Haha, you're right. The only thing I'm good at is rock-paper-scissors...” Shou huffed as he said this to himself.

Then he remembered. The words that Minamida said to him before, and what Palty said to him.

“——Yes. I don't care if it's a weapon or a new rule or whatever. For example, it could be state-of-the-art equipment, and you could add rule conditions that are favorable to you.”

(Rules that work for me: .....)

“——Hmmm, yes, you're right. I'll give you one hint to apologize for this time; Shou has a special ability.”

(Special ability: ..... yeah!)

It was inspiration. It was a revelation. At that time, an image had already appeared in Shou's mind. And it was this image that would greatly affect his future - this “Paradise War”.

“Thanks, Takeshi! Thanks to you, I have a good idea!”

“Hmm? I don't know, but ... ... I hope I've done something to help.”

The two were approached by another person.

“Hey Shou, and Takeshi, is it? Were you two shopping?”

It was Mike and Ichiro, coming from the other side of the street with some kind of package.

“Hey, Mike and Ichiro? Why are you here?”

“ Well, Palty asked us to get some bedding for the guests.”

“Oh, no need to bother.” Takeshi gave a small bow to Mike and the others.

“Hahaha, nah, Shou's friends are like friends to us too. Besides, it was an honor to have an audience with the queen you've been talking about.”

“Queen?” ... ... You know, Mike, Himeko-chan is not like that ... ... Well, I can't deny it, but she's not a bad girl.”

“Huh, I know. A woman's selfishness is a pretty thing. I understand how beautiful she is. But Shou, it seems that you still have your heart set on her.”

“What are you talking about, Mike?

“Oh, you know what? You have the luxury of having Dird and the others with you!”

With that exchange, Mike naturally pushed Shou forward to pull him away from Takeshi. The two of them continued to talk about Himeko.

While Mike was distracting Shou, Ichiro was quietly moving next to Takeshi.

Ichiro asked in a whisper. “What are you doing here?”

“! ... ... you?”

Takeshi looked at Ichiro in surprise. But Ichiro softly put his index finger to his mouth and said, “Shh, keep your head forward and be natural.”

“... ... ... I'm going to 'see the stars in the sky'.”

Ichiro nodded once and held a small pendant in the same shape as Takeshi's. When Takeshi saw that Shou wasn't looking at him, he quickly switched it with his own. Then he handed his own pendant to Ichiro.

“Oh, I see. The stars are really beautiful here at night, you know.”

“... ... Yeah, and the ocean is beautiful, too.” Takeshi breathed a sigh of relief at Ichiro's words as the tension disappeared.

And that was when it happened.

“Gaaaahhh!”

“Please help me!”

A loud scream was heard from the jungle, and the next moment Masuru and Suguru crossed in front of Shou and the others with tremendous speed, and then fell off the cliff into the sea!

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Shou and his friends returned to the tent on the beach.

Masuru and Suguru were slumped in the shade of a tree, soaking wet. Their faces were pale, and they both chattered their teeth and spoke in shaky voices.

“Ho, there really was a ... ...! The beast! Oi, it attacked us!”

“Yes! I didn't know ... ... the jungle was that dangerous!”

They shouted, but Shou only nodded his head. “I'm pretty sure there aren't any large predators on this island, but ... ... Dird was with you, wasn't she?”

“Yeah. But we got separated on the way to ... ..., and I didn't see any such beasts. I didn't hear any monkeys or see any free-range dogs.”

With that, Dird stuck out her tongue and took the fruit she had collected to Palty. At the tent, Mike and the others were bringing in the bedding.

“It's not like you're hurt, come on, you two should help a little. It's where you guys sleep in the first place.”

“Shut up ... ... we're tired.”

“Yes, we are. And we're your guests.” Masuru and Suguru mumbled weakly, and Shou could only furrow his brows in disbelief.

At that moment, a Cabbit padded towards Masuru and Suguru.

“Miah?”

“Whoa! What the hell are you!”

“Go away! I don't want to see any animals right now!” With that, Masuru and Suguru threw a twig at the Cabbit.

The Cabbit dodged it and ducked behind Takeshi.

“Hey, don't hit a kid who doesn't matter. It's embarrassing.” He glared at Masuru and Suguru lightly, making them both shudder.

“Duh, because ... ...”

“Shou, get that thing away from us! Get it away from us!”

“Yes, yes. That's it ... ...” Shou was dumbfounded, but he picked up the trembling Cabbit, who was hiding behind Takeshi.

“Miah!” The Cabbit mewed, wagging her tail at Takeshi.

“Oh, it looks like she's thanking Takeshi.”

“Huh. They seem to be in a bit of a bad mood, you know. Don't get too close.” Takeshi patted the Cabbit's head lightly and headed straight for the tent.

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After entering the tent, Takeshi poured some juice into a glass and handed it to Himeko. He then whispered to her, “I got your stuff.”

“Yeah. That was a little quicker than I thought.” Himeko, who was sweating profusely, sipped her juice and took a breath. “Now all I have to do is bring it back and I'll be able to get the loan.”

“... ... Yes. But I'm still not convinced.”

Himeko's expression was grim. She raised her eyebrows and looked annoyed.

“How can you just come to this island and ask me to bring back a pendant that contains unknown “information” without telling me who and what they want? No matter how much you say to help your company, it seems that I am doing a disgusting job and I feel bad. In the first place, we should be equal to the deal, right? I'm sure there's more to this island than meets the eye.”

“Well, ... I certainly think there's something strange about this island, too ... ...”

Takeshi generally agreed with Himeko's opinion. If that was the case, then it made sense that Minamida had been trying so hard to get them to leave.

Takeshi said in a slightly hushed voice so as not to be heard outside. “But I think we'd better stop looking into it. That Minamida guy and that Miron woman are not normal. I don't want Himeko to be in danger of getting some strange facts.”

“That's ... ...” Himeko fell silent at Takeshi's righteous argument. But of course, she wasn't convinced.

“Well. What about the rest? That Minamida guy said he'd send it over any time?”

At these words, Himeko was silent for a while, as if troubled, holding her juice. Then she murmured. “..... It's a beautiful island, isn't it, here?”

“Yeah. If it was just nature, it'd be a first-class resort.”

“Your lunch was pretty good, too.”

“I have to admit, I was surprised by that. It tasted like it could have been served at a top-notch traditional Japanese restaurant.

“Speaking of which, when I accompanied Shou to the store earlier, he bought a lot of things again. Maybe, just maybe, we'll have some good food tonight.”

“... ... I guess so.”

Takeshi's words seemed to tip the scales in Himeko's mind.

“Okay. I'll keep you company for a few more days. It would be boring to go back on the boat trip right away. In the meantime, maybe we'll learn something about the secrets of this island.”

“Yeah, okay.”

“And...” After a short silence. “I'd like to talk with Shou-kun about ... ... some more things.”

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That night, a dinner party was held with food prepared mainly by Palty.

Miron gave her permission to use the cruiser's toilet and bath, but only for Himeko. Shou and his friends thought she was finally ready to stop being mean to Himeko and had no idea that the fake Miron had been bullying Himeko.

Himeko was surprised at this at first, but soon accepted the idea and proceeded to eat as if satisfied.

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The next day, Shou told Miron that he wanted to go to the secret cove so that Himeko and the others could enjoy themselves.

Miron said, “It's unusual for Shou to ask me so honestly. That's fine. And soon after, Shou borrowed a fishing boat from Minamida and took Himeko and the others to the cove where they had played so hard before, including Dird and the girls.

Shou and Himeko climbed to the top of the hill together to see the many natural wonders of Banjō Island. As expected, Himeko was very excited and moved by this.

Of course, Takeshi, Masuru, and Suguru were very happy with the place.

The time passed quickly and soon the night would come.

After dinner, Shou was alone with Himeko, chatting on the beach, looking out at the ocean.

Himeko looked much more at ease than she had at first.

“That cove was really beautiful. I'm sure this could attract a lot of tourists eventually. I could even turn it into a resort at my place.”

“Haha, I'm glad you're happy. But you know, I've been to that place before - you know, the broken bridge? I fell off that bridge into the ocean once. I was really scared that time.”

“That sounds like fun, I wish I could have seen your physical tricks.”

“Gee, tricks are ... ... haha ... ... hard, though.”

Himeko stared at Shou with calm eyes as he laughed naturally. Himeko spoke up as the noisy voices of Dird and the others could be heard slightly from the tent.

“... ... Hey Shou-kun, why did you come to this island?”

Shou was a little confused by the sudden question.

“Oh, didn't I tell you before I moved here? My parents suddenly decided that they wanted to live here. It turns out that they made a mistake in the contract, and they still can't come here. It's annoying, isn't it? You know how much trouble I'm in right now because of it ... ... Haha.”

“... ... yeah.”

“It was pretty hard at first, but once I got used to it, I realized it's a good island. Minamida-san and the girls were all very nice to me, and I guess that's what you get when you live here. It's still a little hard to live as a survivalist, though.”

“.....” Himeko looked at Shou quietly, ... and then laughed. “Okay, there's no way Shou-kun can hide something like that from me.”

“What?”

“It's nothing. Shou-kun, you've changed since you came to this island.

“..... Hmm, I should say I'm back to my old self.”

“Oh, ...”

That's what Takeshi had said to him. It appeared that Himeko had been thinking the same thing.

“Besides, you seem to be having a lot more fun than when you were with me on the mainland. You're kind of lively, and it does remind me of the ... ... old days. This is the real Shou-kun, isn't it?”

“Yeah ....., that's it.”

“It's okay. If the environment changes, people's positions and ways of thinking will also change. And it was me who decided that Shou-kun could not be my partner for life.”

“.....You're right.”

When she said that again, Shou remembered that he had been rejected that day, but now he realized that he was not so shocked.

“Still, ... it's true that both me and Takeshi were worried about our childhood friend.”

“Yeah ..... I know. Thank you.” For a while after that, only the sound of the waves flowed

silently between them.

“..... Hey Shou-kun. You don't think I should be poor, do you?” She asked as if she knew the answer.

Shou quickly replied. “That's ..... well, unthinkable, isn't it? That's why you chose Takeshi, right?”

“.....”

At Shou's words, Himeko turned her back on him and closed her eyes for a moment, a little sadly. “Yes, I did. You know exactly what I'm talking about.” But Himeko immediately smiled confidently as she always did. “I'll be going home in the morning. It's about time I had a good night's sleep in a proper bed.”

“Haha, that was indeed hard on Himeko-chan.”

“But it wasn't so bad.”

It warmed Shou's heart a little to hear her say that.

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The next morning.

Himeko and the others boarded a cruiser and left Banjō Island. On the cruiser, Himeko and Takeshi stared at the shrinking island and talked.

“So, we never did find out the mystery of the island, did we?”

“I don't care. We got what we came for, and Shou-kun seems to be doing well.” With that, Himeko lightly shook the pendant in her hand in satisfaction.

“..... If it bothers you, would you like to come back to the island? As long as we get permission beforehand, I don't think it'll be anything like this time ... ...”

“Yes. But that's enough. I'm more interested in going on my next vacation to a place with a decent hotel.”

“Yeah, got it.”

Meanwhile, Masuru and Suguru were about to open the lid of the case that was in their cabin.

“Heh heh .....”

“What in the world is in here?”

The case had been buried near the beach. The Cabbit was trying to dig it up, but the two of them found it and chased the Cabbit out of the way so they could dig it up themselves. They took the

case from her.

They had been looking forward to opening it on the return trip, and finally get to see what was inside.

“.....? What is this? Is it candy?”

“Hmph! But hey, it's the kind of thing those bastards would be obsessed with. Food is what it is.”

“That's true. But it looks like something foreign, doesn't it? And it's pretty new, isn't it?”

“Seeing as how they didn't give it to us, but kept it in a sturdy case like this ....., it's pretty rare, huh? Maybe it was Shou's prized possession.”

“I see. That's right. I'll take it since it's so rare.”

“Don't you have to tell Himeko and Takeshi?”

“It's only one bag. They won't know if we don't tell them.”

“Yeah, I guess that's true.”

The two grinned at each other. Finally, they opened the suspicious, poisonous colored pastry bag...

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Cabbit, M, grinned. Minamida noticed and called out to her.

“Hmm? You seem to be having some fun, aren't you?”

“Miah♪”

Shou and the others were now all looking at Himeko's cruiser.

Mike and Ichiro were not there today, but Dird and the girls were waving them off. Alea and the others were laughing at them, and Miron said, “Finally, the noisy ones are gone,” to which they all replied, “You're the loudest one, though.”

Then, from the distant cruiser, they heard what sounded like a cry of “Gaaaahhh .....!” But it was soon lost in the sound of the waves, and Shou and the others never heard it. But on Minamida's shoulder, M was smiling a little happily. It was as if she had succeeded in some kind of devious scheme.

“Well, anyway, ... thank goodness, they're going home.” Minamida said tiredly and Shou returned apologetically.

“I'm sorry Minamida, I've caused you a lot of trouble ... . Himeko-chan, she's not a bad girl, but she's always been like that ... ... And Takeshi and his friends haven't changed at all ... ...”

“Haha, well, I'm glad everything turned out okay.”

“Thank you, Minamida. Thanks to everyone too. You've helped me a lot this time.”

“Hmmm! I had fun too, so it's okay!”

“I'm a little tired, though.”

“It was a bit noisy, but ..... it was lively and fun.”

“Yes, it was a valuable experience to be able to talk with Shou's friends ... ... Hmm, please don't mind me, Shou.”

“Yeah, I really appreciate it.”

Shou thought he had caused a lot of trouble, but the girls' kind words saved him. So, he made a slightly serious face and said, “Um, ...Minamida-san, so, I'd like to talk to you for a minute, if that's okay.”

“Hmm? ..... Oh, okay.” Minamida nodded quickly, probably having guessed from Shou's appearance.

Shou and Minamida moved away a little and started talking quietly so that the girls couldn't hear them.

“I'm sorry to bother you. Um, I was wondering about the alternative to the acoustic weapon.”

“Oh, did you come up with something?”

“Yes. Actually...” Shou told him his suggestion.

“What?” At first, Minamida was terribly shocked and very confused, but then his expression gradually changed and he ... ... finally agreed, “I see. I'll let the boss know. I'll contact you again when I get an answer. Is that okay with you?”

“Yes, thank you very much!” Shou replied with a cheerful expression. (Why hadn't I noticed something so simple before?) While thinking about this, Shou's eyes lit up with a bright face. If the current proposal was accepted, the ... ... situation would surely change rapidly. He was sure of it.

They soon returned to Dird and the others. There Minamida said, “Hey guys, thanks for all your hard work today. Thanks to you, we were able to hide the secret of the island. I'll have to do something to repay you next time. Oh yeah, Miss Miron, I want to tell you a few things about the next battle, okay?”

“Hm? Right now?”

“Yeah, I'm kind of in a hurry.”

“Yes, yes, okay. Well, you guys, I'm off for a bit. I may not be back tonight ... ... huh, but don't worry!” Miron smiled in a disgusting way, but Shou and the others just let it go with a dumbfounded “Yes, yes. Miron looked frustrated and said, “Kiii!”

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Then she and Minamida entered the basement of his house, and Miron gasped. Because bound there was ... ... the fake Miron.

“Actually, I wanted to talk to you about how to handle her.”

“... ... So, you knew all this from the beginning, didn't you?”

“I did consider it as a possibility at the stage when the forces were evenly distributed to the four forces, as if it was planned. Including the fact that they'd probably use the pooled money as a quid pro quo.”

“... ... You're a scary man.”

“It wasn't me. She saw it all coming. Most people are like babies to her.”

“The owner of this island, right?”

“Yes. The only mistake we made was not being able to stop Kukoma's friend - Himeko-chan's parents - from messing with the company. As a result, we allowed them to betray Kukoma-kun. Perhaps they had promised to provide that information database in exchange for a loan.”

“Where's that data?”

“It's been switched, of course. Oh, but I've made sure that the fake data has a certain value so that a certain country that sent a woman who looks a lot like Miss Miron won't renege on their promise.”

“Value?” Miron asked, and Minamida showed her some information on a monitor.

When Miron saw it ... “This is ... ... buuuut! Ahahaha! Kuhahahahahahaha ～～～～!” She burst out laughing and shaking. Because it was full of embarrassing secrets that the masterminds of a certain country would want to hide.

“Hi, hihihihi ... ... I see, that's quite an elaborate way to get back at me.”

“Then, we're going to fix her plastic surgery and erase all her memories related to this case. But before that, I'll have to analyze the data from her memories to find out how she got to Banjō Island and what kind of support organization is behind it. After that, I plan to return her to you.”

Miron managed to stop laughing there and said with a somewhat serious face. “I see. ..... So, what about the disposition of the important space side collaborators? Do you think that maybe they're going to be destroyed?”

“No, I'm just warning them about their future ... ... I think their intentions are going to move in a direction that doesn't have much to do with them."

“Huh? What do you mean?”

“Oh, actually, in exchange for the injunction against the use of the acoustic weapon, there was a condition that Kukoma-kun offered just now. I've already tossed it to the top, so it'll be discussed soon. I'll let you know when it's decided.”

“Hmm ... ... Well, okay. So, I guess we can consider this matter closed then?”

“Yeah, fine.”

“Yeah ... ... and I'm wondering about something else, if that's okay?”

“Hmm? What is it?”

“You see, the new country that will be formed as a result of this battle will incorporate Earth, right?”

“Yes, that's right.”

“What kind of intention is it to incorporate Earth into the pirate's new country? Because it's a pretty special place, even if it's just the birthplace of the current Empress, isn't it?”

At Miron's question, Minamida put his hand on his chin as if he was thinking a little. Then he answered. “Well, I guess ... ... you didn't want to make it a 'special place', did you?”

“What?”

“Of course, the country that Dird and her friends are going to join is just a newborn, and ... ... Earth is still just an egg. Well, it's kind of hard to explain. ... ...”

“... ... Hmm. Well, I can kind of understand. But I see what you mean. You're a tough guy after all.”

So that's what Miron had interpreted it to mean, that he wanted to keep Earth from having some sort of superiority complex about being a special planet when it went into space.

“Be that as it may, the battle has been temporarily suspended until Kukoma-kun's deliberations are over.”

“Yes, yes, I understand; I'll look forward to seeing what Shou-kun has proposed. See you then.” Miron said and walked out.

“Oh ... ..., she left so easily this time ... ...”

“Oh. Were you actually expecting something?” Cabbit M said sarcastically to the disappointed

Minamida.

“No, because it seems that what everyone - the seniors - said is true. I'm sure it's a little complicated, though, since we're dealing with Miss Miron.

“But that's for them to decide, isn't it?”

“Yes, ... I'm grateful for the peace here, and I used to get a lot of similar comments. Now I'll support Kukoma-kun in the shadows.”

“Huh, history repeats itself. Now, let's start treating the imposter, shall we?”

“Yeah, okay.”

Epilogue

While Minamida and Miron were talking in the underground facility, Shou and the others were preparing lunch under the clear sky, leisurely listening to the sound of the crashing surf.

“Ah... Oh, Dird, what should we do for Sensei's lunch?”

Shou, who was preparing the snorkel and harpoon, asked Dird, who was also preparing her snorkel and harpoon, and she said, “Hmmm,” and then turned to Alea and the others.

“Hey guys! Who do you think needs Sensei's lunch, ～～～～?”

At that, all three of them raised their hands in unison.

Then Alea, who was the first to raise her hand, said. “I know she said she might not come home tonight, but I'm sure he'll be lukewarm about it anyway. I'm sure she'll come back in a huff and burn, so go get more.”

“Besides, I don't have much left of the dried fish anymore.”

“Yes, that's right. I'll take the usual or a little more, Shou, Dird.”

“Yes, sir.” “Yes, sir!” With that, Shou and Dird started running towards the ocean.

A little while later.

Shou, who had been harpooning, climbed out of the water once he had caught some fish. “Ooooh, toilet toilet! I suddenly feel the need to pee when I'm cold.”

He ran along the hot, sunbaked beach, leaving wet marks on the sand, and headed for the bathroom at the rocky beach. He arrived at the toilet, and opened the door, but...

“.....What?”

There, Shou encountered a strange girl.

“..... Ah.”

The girl was sitting on the ..... toilet seat with her mouth hanging open, as if she didn't understand the current situation.

They remained rigid and looked at each other in silence for a while ... ...

“..... Ki, Kyaaa